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THE SHORTER EPISTLES;

VIZ:

OF PAUL

TO THE

GALATIANS; EPHESIANS; PHILIPPIANS;
COLOSSIANS; THESSALONIANS; TIMOTHY;
TITUS AND PHILEMON;

ALSO,

OF JAMES, PETER, AND JUDE.

BY

REV. HENRY COWLES, D.D.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable."—PAUL.

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PREFACE.

To help the reader of these "Shorter Epistles," I have sought to place each in the sunlight of its own individual history, bringing all we can learn of the writer and of the circumstances of his contemplated readers to bear upon the sense and the force of his words—to make the former clear and the latter impressive. Like all sensible letters, these also were written for a purpose, and should be read in the light of that purpose.—It is in these epistles to the earliest churches that we look for the practical Christianity inculcated by the apostles—that we see how this practical Christianity was built upon Christ and the staple truths of his redemptive scheme, and with what spirit the founders of those churches wrought for the salvation of men. Hence, some of the main points of value in these epistles.

In them are "some things hard to be understood," and others that are very easy. It has been my policy to pass over the latter with few words—the more so that I might make time and leave space for careful, and, if need be, somewhat fundamental discussion of points really difficult or at least much controverted. This policy will account for the disproportionate space given to some verses and chapters compared with others.

The essay upon Canon Farrar's book—"*Eternal Hope*"—has been deemed in place in this volume, partly because his doctrine has been supposed to find its scriptural support very largely in the theory that Christ preached "Eternal Hope" to the spirits

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in prison (1 Pet. 3: 18–20), and not less because the subject is arresting much attention, and moreover, is intrinsically vital to human salvation.

My next volume (should a kind Providence still favor) will include Paul's three longer epistles;—one to Rome; two to Corinth.

HENRY COWLES.

OBERLIN, OHIO, *July*, 1879.

LIFE AND LABORS OF PAUL.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

The best introduction to the Epistles of Paul is the study of the man.

Born very near the Christian era, at Tarsus, "no mean city," but chief in the province of Cilicia, and located in a wide and fertile plain on the banks of the Cydnus, his early home furnished for his youthful development the stimulus of great natural beauty, coupled with the surroundings of commerce, Greek culture, and contact with much of the best thought of the age. Its location between the great center of Jewish mind on the one hand, and the Greek and Roman civilization of Asia Minor and of Europe on the other, suggests its special adaptation for the early training of this great apostle to the Gentiles. Under the Roman emperors it was renowned as a place of education, put by Strabo in the same rank with Athens and Alexandria, with the preference over even those cities in the point of the zeal of its citizens for learning.

Of Jewish parentage—"a Pharisee of the Pharisees,"—Saul was naturally sent to Jerusalem to complete his education at the feet of Gamaliel—than whom no teacher of his age stood higher. There Paul's course of study could not have omitted the Old Testament Scriptures, while in addition, every thing embraced in the traditions of the elders and the doctrines of the Pharisees must have been thoroughly mastered. Thus he became a most zealous Pharisee down to the hour of his conversion, and a powerful opponent of Pharisaism ever after. With the entire attitude of Pharisaic mind no man could be more familiar, and consequently none could be better qualified to expose and refute its errors and to set before all Pharisees the purer doctrine and spirit of Jesus Christ. The marvel of his life is, that, with such qualifications for logically refuting the

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Pharisaism of the Jews, he should have been assigned specially by his Master to mission work among the Gentiles.—— It should be remembered, however, that Gentile missions every-where began in the synagogue, working on the basis of Jewish faith and of the Jewish Scriptures—around which in every city, there seems to have clustered a group of devout Gentile minds, in the relation, if not of proselytes, at least of inquirers and learners—constituting the most hopeful class for the missionary's earliest labors. For this work Paul was pre-eminently qualified, and thus in every city he began.

Saul the Persecutor.

The Scripture record brings Paul to view first as *Saul the persecutor*. In the story of the first Christian martyr (Acts 7 and 8) he comes to the front, active, ambitious for distinction, ardent even to the point of madness and rage, "breathing out threatening and slaughter," pushing his search for the hated sect even unto foreign cities. It was in the height of this intensely zealous and malign persecution, when, armed with the official authority of the Jewish sanhedrim, he was approaching Damascus, all suddenly, this persecutor of all Christian men became himself a Christian, and forthwith began to preach the faith he had thus far labored so zealously to destroy.

But before we study this astounding, glorious revolution of character and life, let us note that Saul's experience as a persecutor was part of his training for his gospel work. Ever after he knew the heart of a persecutor. He could readily fathom the motives and spirit of the men who hunted his life as he had the lives of the same class of men. It was easy for him to say in his heart—I have been where ye are now; I can make all the apology for you which your case admits. He could tell them the story of his own wonderful change. He could pray with full soul that the same power which turned his heart might turn theirs. We shall not be likely to overestimate the incidental adaptations for his gospel labor and patience and prayer which were thus wrought into Paul's living experience as toward his Jewish persecutors.

Saul's Conversion.

This event is narrated first by Luke (Acts 9); later we have it from Paul himself, before the Jewish mob at Jerusa-

lem (Acts 22: 3–16); then before Festus and Agrippa at Cesarea (Acts 26: 9–20); besides several references in his epistles (1 Tim. 1: 12–16; 1 Cor. 15: 9, 10; Phil. 3: 4–7). ——Of the externals of this scene, the salient points were, the great light and the voice from heaven. Both these had the effect to arrest and fasten his attention and to awe his spirit into reverence, without apparently disconcerting his mind, or disturbing his self-possession. The central fact was the manifest presence of Jesus whom he was persecuting. The voice was not of thunder to stun and overwhelm, but of blended rebuke and pity: "Why dost thou persecute me?" What have I done to deserve such treatment at thy hands? Besides, this rage of thine against me reacts in trouble and torture upon thyself: "It is hard for thee to kick against the goads;" "There is no peace to the wicked." The spirit of these words was tender and touching. The persecutor could not but see at a glance that Jesus of Nazareth had power and withal good cause to crush him into perdition. But, instead of this, strangely enough, this voice was gentle, compassionate, loving. Its tones and its spirit at once broke the persecutor's heart. Never had he seen and felt the spirit of heaven before. Suddenly a new world opened to his mental vision—*the world of love!* Was it possible that Jesus whom he was so bitterly persecuting had been shedding tears over his folly and madness, and had now met him to speak these tender words and to turn his heart from rage to gentleness—from hate to love—from the spirit and the work of Satan to the spirit and service of the bleeding Lamb of God!

Saul's first recorded utterance—"Who art thou, Lord?" brought the explanation of this heavenly vision; his next—"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" was the first indication he gave of the great change then passing over his soul. The Lord promptly told him what he had for his new-born servant to do; and the servant as promptly testifies—"Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood;" "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." From that hour, to "preach Christ and him crucified" was his first concern, the supreme labor of his life. His Lord soon showed him what he must needs suffer, yet neither then nor ever after was his purpose thereby shaken.——Paul was a man of strong convictions and of unflinching purpose. His utmost strength went solid into this new life. From that hour, it was understood between himself and his Lord

that he gave his whole heart and utmost power to the Lord's work, and that his Lord in return gave him moral strength to the full extent of his need. To the latter point some precious testimonies drop incidentally from the apostle's pen:——"I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me;" He said to me: "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness;" and again, far on toward the end of his earthly work: "I thank Jesus Christ our Lord who *empowered* me"—endued me with power—"because he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1 Tim. 1: 12).——So Paul became mighty through Christ to preach his gospel and to bear affliction for his Master's sake. His gratitude and love to Christ would allow him to do nothing less or else; his powers of endurance forbade his doing more. Thus he wore away his life in that sweetest, noblest work possible to man—preaching the everlasting gospel in love to his Lord and Savior.

The *sources of Paul's history*, it scarcely need be said, are the pen of Luke in the "Acts of the Apostles," and his own pen in his thirteen acknowledged epistles—Romans to Philemon inclusive, ("Hebrews" not included).

Of the great missionary work of his life, the salient characteristics are these:

1. Every-where and always, to preach Christ and him crucified; Jesus of Nazareth, the long promised Messiah of the Old Testament prophets—the one only Savior of lost men—of the Jews first, but also of the Gentiles. Never diverted really from his one great theme; promptly returning to it from every necessary digression; never weary of "the old, old story," and with never a feeling that it had exhausted itself upon his hand or become tame to his sensibility; so he preached and so he testified, and nowhere, so far as the record shows, without some fruit in souls won to the faith and the love of the Crucified.

2. He was never quite happy to work alone. Either because of his strong social nature, or of his physical frailties, or the conviction of better results from associated labor, he almost invariably had some fellow-laborer and sometimes more than one associated in his work. Barnabas was his helper for a whole year at Antioch, and onward throughout his entire first missionary tour, until, at the point of arranging for his second tour, they parted, and Paul chose Silas (the "Sylvanus" of the Epistles). Still

later we find Timothy, Titus, Luke, and others associated in this service.

3. He seems never to have worked without a well-considered plan. His time was not scattered miscellaneously or impulsively. He seems to have adjusted all his activities to a well-defined method. Thus, after his first visit to Antioch (Acts 11: 25, 26) he made that his base of operations. That was his great missionary home. From that point he fitted out for missionary tours; and to that, the tour having been accomplished, he returned. Was it the hallowed associations of his first great missionary ordination (Acts 13: 1–3) or the demand in his social nature for a home to come to after certain years of toil; or was it the moral strength he needed and found in the strong Christian hearts of that early scene of gospel triumphs—we are, perhaps, left to surmise, under the probability that most or all of these influences conspired to recommend and ensure this plan.

4. Of yet higher importance in his plan of operations was his policy of seizing the best strategic points in his Christian campaigns—the great centers of population, travel, and commerce—points reached with comparative ease because they were on the great thoroughfares of trade and travel, connected by the marvelous Roman roads of that age and by the frequent transit of merchant ships. Such were Antioch, Ephesus, Troas, Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, Rome. These points it was his policy to seize and to hold despite of opposition and difficulties. From these he would have the gospel "sounded forth" all abroad through adjacent regions. Thus the entire civilized world of that age felt the mighty impulses set in motion by the energy, faith, and spiritual power of this one great Apostle of the Gentiles.

5. Tracing the salient points of his missionary labors chronologically and geographically, with such light as the sacred record affords, we date his conversion about A. D. 37, after which follows a period of seven years, to be filled out from imperfectly defined dates and localities. Within these we must provide for his flight from Damascus to Jerusalem and thence to Tarsus; also some three years in Arabia (Gal. 1: 17, 18); another three in Syria and Cilicia, having Tarsus as his base of operations, till, in A. D. 44, he is brought by Barnabas from Tarsus to Antioch for one year of missionary labor (Acts 11: 26). Then they go up to Jerusalem (A. D. 45), bearing supplies for the sufferers

from famine (Acts 11: 29, 30).——During A. D. 46 and 47, Antioch is their base of operations (Acts 12: 25 and 13: 1). Then and at this place he was formally inducted into his great mission work among the Gentiles, which, we must observe, was not his ordination to the ministry, but was rather the public indorsement of himself and Barnabas by the brethren at Antioch, under a special commission from the Holy Ghost to the new enterprise of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. Jewish feeling on this question made it important that the enterprise should be distinctly and unquestionably indorsed, first by the Holy Ghost, and then by the approval of the strong church gathered where the disciples were first called Christians.

From this starting point it is customary to date Paul's great missionary tours: the first during A. D. 48 and 49 (Acts 13 and 14), touching Seleucia, Cyprus (with its great cities Salamis and Paphos); thence Perga in Pamphylia; Antioch in Pisidia; Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. Turning back, they revisit many of these points, completing this tour by returning to Antioch, their missionary center.

His second missionary tour, made with Silas (not Barnabas) begun A. D. 51, with revisiting and confirming the churches of Syria and Cilicia, thence south and west to Derbe and Lystra, where Timothy becomes their associate. Then they traversed Phrygia and Galatia, and would have pushed onward to Bithynia and the northern confines of Asia Minor, but the Spirit plainly indicated their course into Europe; and first to Macedonia. Leaving Asia at Troas, they crossed the Hellespont, and soon found themselves launched upon the great European field, in which Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and Corinth were successively the theater of their labors.——In Corinth Paul spent one and a half years (Acts 18: 11), writing thence his earliest known epistles, viz., those to the Thessalonians (A. D. 52 and 53). Touching Ephesus on his return tour, he pressed forward to be in Jerusalem at the Pentecost of A. D. 54. Tarrying there apparently only to "salute the church" (Acts 18: 22), he presently returned to Antioch, thus once more completing his missionary circuit (the second), of full three years' period.

Having spent some time there, of indefinite length, he commenced his *third* missionary tour, revisiting successively the churches of Galatia and Phrygia, and then sat down to long and earnest work in the great city of Asia—Ephesus—

which became the main point of his labors for the ensuing three years, A. D. 54–57, as shown in Acts 19 with Acts 20: 31.——A great mob having abruptly terminated his stay there (Acts 20: 1) he went thence into Macedonia, visiting the old localities in Greece, whence planning once more to be in Jerusalem at Pentecost (Acts 20: 16), he touched at Miletus, the port of Ephesus, and met there by appointment the elders of the latter city, and thence moved onward to Jerusalem. Here he was soon arrested in his great missionary operations, held in durance at Cesarea two years (A. D. 58–60); was brought for defense successively before the Jewish populace (Acts 22); then before the sanhedrim (Acts 23); then before Felix (Acts 24); and finally before Festus and Agrippa (Acts 25 and 26); then in the autumn of 60 he was sent a prisoner to Rome (Acts 27 and 28), arriving in the spring of 61. There, after two years of personal restraint "in his own hired house" (A. D. 61–63) the continuous sacred narrative of his missionary labors is brought to its close (Acts 28).

During this third and last scripturally recorded tour he wrote a second and large group of his epistles; viz., that to the Galatians from Ephesus in A. D. 54 or 55; or as some with less authority suppose, from Corinth late in A. D. 57; 1 Corinthians from Ephesus in A. D. 57; 2 Corinthians from Macedonia in the ensuing summer; and that to the Romans from Corinth, also in A. D. 57. During his confinement at Rome about A. D. 62, he wrote a third group, including Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians.

After these two years at Rome, it is generally supposed that he was set at liberty; that he visited Macedonia (Phil. 2: 24); and Asia Minor (Philemon 22) A. D. 63; and then Spain in A. D. 65 according to his expressed purpose (Rom. 15: 24–28); then in the summer of A. D. 66, Asia Minor (1 Tim. 1: 3); and that during A. D. 67, he wrote 1 Timothy from Macedonia; his Epistle to Titus from Ephesus; wintered according to his purpose (Titus 3: 12) at Nicopolis; was imprisoned at Rome late in A. D. 67 or early in A. D. 68; when, while in prison and awaiting his execution, he wrote his last epistle (2 Timothy), and finally was beheaded by order of Nero, in May or June of A. D. 68.

Authority for the facts and dates of this supposed closing period of Paul's life is found in part in his epistles, but chiefly in the early Christian fathers. His epistles to Timothy and to Titus and the local allusions made in them re-

fuse to be accommodated in any previous period of his life. Moreover, there are expressed purposes, *e. g.*, to visit Spain, which, if ever carried into effect, must have room after his first imprisonment at Rome.——Such in substance is the testimony of the Scriptures as to this last supposed period of his life.

The testimony of the early Christian fathers is very explicit and unanimous. Clement, a disciple of Paul (Phil. 4: 3), and afterwards bishop of Rome, writing from Rome to Corinth, asserts expressly that Paul had preached the gospel in the East and in the West; that he had instructed the whole world in righteousness (*i. e.*, the whole Roman Empire), and that he had gone to the extremities of the West before his martyrdom. This language must be understood to include Spain.

Next, the ancient document known as the Canon of Muratori, of date about A. D. 170, states that Luke in the Acts of the Apostles omits the journey of Paul from Rome to Spain. This assumes that such a journey was supposed to have been made.

Eusebius says that after defending himself successfully (at the bar of Cæsar) it is currently reported that the apostle again went forth to proclaim the gospel, and afterwards came to Rome a second time and was martyred under Nero. ——Chrysostom's words are to the effect that after his residence in Rome, Paul departed to Spain.——And finally Jerome represents that "Paul was dismissed by Nero that he might preach Christ's gospel in the West."*

In a case of this sort, it seems legitimate to take account of the probabilities. Thus, the release of Paul from his first imprisonment is probable from the obvious fact that his prosecution, emanating from Jerusalem, was weak. It plainly was weak before Festus and Agrippa; and weak as to any malign animus while he lived a sort of prisoner at large two full years in his own hired house at Rome waiting for his appeal to come to a hearing. The presumption is that on this hearing no prosecutor appeared and that the suit ceased by default.——The case was totally different when he was next arraigned under the impulse of a general persecution against all Christians as enemies to the Roman state, not to say, against mankind.

As to the reason why Luke's narrative ends with this first imprisonment at Rome, nothing can be known with certainty.

*See Conybeare and Howson, vol. ii, pp. 437–439.

If, as is suggested in my volume on the "Epistle to the Hebrews," Luke was the personal "I" of this epistle, he may have gone as intimated there (13: 19, 23) to visit the Hebrew church gathered under his labors at Cesarea, and may not have joined his old associate until some point in his second imprisonment (2 Tim. 4: 11).

6. *How* Paul preached and *how* he labored in the gospel, is brought to view very distinctly in a few recorded examples. We have one discourse of his in a synagogue of Jews at Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13); and at least the substance of a discourse to idolatrous Gentiles, viz., at Athens (Acts 17); besides a less formal and extended speech at Lystra (Acts 14: 11–18).——Of his labors out of the pulpit from house to house, we have his own testimony before the elders of the Ephesian church at Miletus (Acts 20: 17–35), and also in his epistles not infrequent allusions to his sufferings, privations, cares, burdens, and to his tender, tearful, prayerful spirit. These allusions we shall have frequent occasion to notice in the study of these epistles.

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

INTRODUCTION.

The inquiring mind, taking up this Epistle to the Galatians, will ask who this people were; where they were located; but especially, what Paul's relations to them had been; what occasioned the writing of this epistle; what were the points at issue between himself and those churches, and how he met them. Other points of subordinate interest would be the date and *place* of this writing. It would also be interesting if we might know its immediate results upon those churches; but on this point no definite historic knowledge has reached our times.

The Galatians take their name from the ancient Gauls of Western Europe. A colony of that people swept through Europe from west to east, some of whom crossed over into Asia Minor as early as the third century before Christ. In the apostolic age they had settled into political relations as a Roman province. They were located somewhat centrally in Asia Minor, having the province of Asia (so-called then) on the west; Cappadocia on the east; Pamphylia and Cilicia on the south; Bithynia and Pontus on the north.——It need not be assumed that the entire population were of Gallic (Celtic) origin. Rather it must be supposed that a substratum of the earlier Phrygian population remained, coupled also with a much more recent interspersion of Romans, consequent upon its relations as a province of the great Roman Empire. There was also a considerable sprinkling of Jews, who were dispersed widely over those districts of Asia Minor. The staple elements of this mixed population were obviously Gallic. It is noticeable that the general type of character which appears in this epistle is very distinctly fore-indicated in their national history. Prof. Lightfoot remarks: "The main features of the Gaulish character are traced with great distinctness by the Roman writers.

Quickness of apprehension, promptitude in action, great impressibility, an eager craving after knowledge—this is the brighter aspect of the Celtic character. Inconstant and quarrelsome, treacherous in their dealings, incapable of sustained effort, easily disheartened by failure—such they appear when viewed on their darker side. Fickleness is the term used to express their temperament." ("Smith's Dictionary," p. 856.)

The type of their religious worship in their pagan life involved intense superstition and passionate fondness for ritual observances. These traits of character reappear in their sudden lapse from Christianity to the ritualism of the Judaizing teachers.

This Galatian population seems to have resided in rural districts; at least they are nowhere concentrated in large commercial cities. Sacred history makes no allusion to any city, great or small, but uniformly speaks of the Galatian "country" or "region,"* and never of any metropolitan church, corresponding to that of Ephesus, or Corinth, or Antioch, but of "the churches of Galatia" (1 Cor. 16: 1 and Gal. 1: 2). Consequently Paul's labors among them were in the form of missionary "touring." The history alludes to two such tours, the first (Acts 16: 6) in company with Silas, and shortly after the great Jerusalem Council (about A. D. 50), in the earlier stages of what is commonly reckoned his second great missionary circuit; the second (Acts 18: 23) about three years later (A. D. 54), early in his third missionary journey. How much time he spent among them in either tour is not indicated. It does appear, however, that the people received him with warm cordiality and his message with great promptness and hopefulness. Paul's expectations were manifestly high and strong; his disappointment, therefore, was great and his grief deep when he found them so soon lapsed from the faith they had welcomed so warmly.

This brings us to the great fact which is central to their entire history and pivotal to our epistle, viz., that Judaizing emissaries had gone among them, teaching that they must be circumcised and must needs observe the entire rites of the Mosaic system *as conditions of salvation*. Such were the men described (Acts 15: 1) whose doctrine and preaching gave occasion to the celebrated Council at Jerusalem. "They came down from Judea" (*i. e.*, to Antioch) "and

* χωρα.

taught the brethren, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye can not be saved."——The continued observance of circumcision, and its connected Mosaic rites, in the case of Jewish converts, was sufficiently perilous, having a constant tendency to foster an undue dependence on what was merely external; yet those converts *might* receive Christ by faith and remain firm in their reliance upon him only. Many seem to have done so. Out of deference to their ancient and strong veneration for Moses, the forms of his system had been tolerated in the case of Jewish converts. But when converts of Gentile antecedents were thrown upon circumcision and the Mosaic rites *as essential to their salvation*, this new doctrine must naturally, almost necessarily, strike at the very foundations of the whole Christian system. It must tend powerfully to supplant Christ and his cross, to put in his stead a reliance upon merely external observances. To hold that Christ is insufficient without circumcision is to put Christ below circumcision, and, of course, to make circumcision more really essential and fundamental than Christ. This subverts the whole gospel scheme.

The quick eye of Paul saw this peril. He knew enough of Judaism and of the ritualistic spirit of the Pharisee to see in this a vital issue—a question of life and death to the soul. Hence he met this issue in this epistle with intense feeling and with his utmost energy. The entire epistle labors this one great point only; has entire unity from beginning to end; makes every word bear upon this one momentous question, and bear, moreover, with tremendous logical force.——As his own apostolic authority had been assailed, he first defends himself on this point, maintaining throughout the first two chapters that his apostolic authority is second to none other; that he held his commission from Christ himself, and could by no means yield for a moment to the insinuations and charges of his Jewish opponents.—— Then in the two next chapters (3d and 4th) he argues the great question of salvation by faith in Christ as against the Judaizers' doctrine of salvation by works of law. To adapt this argument to Jewish mind, its proofs are drawn mainly from their own Scriptures, and especially from the history of Abraham, the revered father of their nation. It is shown that he was justified by faith alone—not by works; and that the covenant which God made with him and his posterity was altogether on the basis of *promise* which called

for *faith* and said nothing at all about works of law as the ground of acceptance with God. Setting works of law thus aside Paul knew would raise the question: What then is the use of law? to which he replies: To convince men of sin; of the hopelessness of salvation on the ground of perfect obedience, and therefore of their need of a Redeemer who has redeemed believers from the curse of the law by assuming and bearing a curse in his own crucified body.—— Collateral arguments and illustrations fill a subordinate but useful place. The details of Paul's great argument will appear in the notes.

The epistle closes with two chapters of very practical bearing—to show that nothing else but the gospel scheme of salvation by faith in Christ, working in the power of the Holy Ghost, ever brings forth the fruits of holiness; that circumcision and works of law, done for justification, never did and never can rise above the fleshly elements of selfishness and moral corruption, and therefore must be discarded as powerless toward real purity of heart and life, and consequently, toward acceptance before God.

It will be seen that the moral scope of this epistle is of the highest order; that it deals with the greatest and most vital questions pertaining to human salvation; that though its particular issues over circumcision and the rites of the Mosaic system are *in that form* no longer living questions, yet in their nature and bearing upon what really constitutes the gospel system, that old question still lives, pregnant with great and glorious truth for all the ages to the end of time.

One other question, germain to this introduction, should be noticed, viz., The *date* and *place* of the writing of this epistle. The importance of these points is not great, yet they have some interest. Unfortunately, the data for positive conclusions are unusually limited. Internal evidence from the epistle itself is singularly deficient. No salutations are sent from parties present with the writer; no allusions are made to his own personal surroundings; nothing is here to indicate *where* he was, nor with any certainty *when* he wrote. He says (1: 6)—"I marvel that ye are *so soon* removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel;"—which favors the opinion that at this writing, no long time had elapsed since his last visit. ——Again, the strong similarity of general scope between this epistle and that to the Romans has been thought to indicate that they were written near the same time; but this

is of small account. For what forbids that Paul should have had the same views of the gospel scheme in its relations to the covenant of works throughout all his Christian life?

Two theories as to *date* and *place* divide the critics: one maintained by Conybeare and Howson, in their "Life and Epistles of Paul," that it was written from Corinth, late in A. D. 57; the other, that of Ellicott and others, that he wrote it from Ephesus, near the commencement of his three years' labor there; *i. e.*, in A. D. 54 or 55. This supposes the time to have been really short after his second tour among those Galatian churches. The probabilities seem to be mainly in favor of this latter opinion. The strength of critical judgment sustains it.

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

CHAPTER I.

THE briefest possible introduction sets forth the writer's high commission as an apostle of Jesus Christ and of God the Father (v. 1); bears the customary salutation of grace and peace (v. 2); traces these blessings to the great atoning sacrifice of Christ for our sins coupled with its ultimate purpose to deliver human souls from sin no less than from condemnation under law (v. 3–5); then promptly brings out the great occasion for this writing, viz., the sudden lapse of some at least of the Galatian converts unto another gospel (v. 6, 7), which "other gospel" and all its authors and abettors, Paul most earnestly denounces (v, 8, 9); and then proceeds to defend himself against his traducers, asserting the divine authority of his mission and teachings (v. 10–12); appealing to his Pharisaic life (v. 13, 14), his conversion and subsequent history (v. 15–24).

1. Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)

2. And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:

It was entirely vital to the object of this epistle that Paul should vindicate his divine mission as an apostle. The case required him to speak with authority, and of course demanded, first of all, that this authority should be traced to its source in his direct commission from God. Hence this stands in the very front of the letter—in its first words: I, Paul, am sent forth as an apostle with authority and commission, not from men in any remote sense, as the ancient priests held office by their birthright from Aaron; not by man—by any one man's special authority; but directly and only as one commissioned by Jesus Christ; and yet farther back, by God the Father who in raising Jesus from the dead had fully indorsed him as his own eternal Son—the appointed Redeemer of lost men.——All the brethren now with me unite in this Christian salutation; probably he would imply—in the contents and spirit of this epistle.——Who these brethren were can not now be known with certainty. If we could determine the question of *place* between Corinth and Ephesus, we

might approximate toward the answer to this question. In this uncertainty it must suffice to say that the Galatian brethren doubtless knew where Paul was at this writing, and what fellow-laborers were there with him.——See on this point the closing paragraphs of the introduction.

3. Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God the Father, and *from* our Lord Jesus Christ,

4. Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

5. To whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

"Grace" is the comprehensive word for the love of God manifesting itself in the salvation of men; while "peace" best applies to the resulting blessedness which comes from the reception of God's mercies.——May this divine love be richly manifested in your behalf, and may the consequent fruits of peace—all spiritual blessings—abound to your souls.

These blessings come from God the Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom—let it be distinctly said—"He gave himself a sacrifice for our sins"—a fact lying at the very center of this gospel scheme, yet a fact utterly left out from the Judaizing scheme—that "other gospel" which is yet no gospel, but into which ye have been seduced to your great peril. Moreover, Christ gave himself for us to do what circumcision and works of law never can do—viz., "deliver us from this present evil world"—which comprehensively includes all the powers of sin and of temptation. From all these, the mission and sacrifice of Christ both can and will deliver us. For this result, that mission and sacrifice have the indorsement of the Father's will, to whom therefore be glory forever!

6. I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

7. Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

Surprise and even astonishment break forth from Paul's burdened heart. Can it be that so soon after your warm and most hopeful reception of the gospel of Christ, ye are turning yourselves away (so the Greek) from him who hath called you—not precisely *into* the grace of Christ, but *in* and through (by means of) Christ's precious grace—unto another and totally *different* gospel—not another one of the same general character which might subserve the same ultimate end of saving the soul?——For the sense of this word another* (see Mark 16: 12)—"After that he appeared in *another* form"—a very different one; and Luke 9: 29: "As he prayed the aspect of his countenance became *another*" (Greek)—*i. e.*, entirely different; suddenly changed.——

*ἕτερον.

Most emphatically Paul declares: This is not another gospel, in any good sense of the word gospel; for it is really no gospel at all, but only a delusion, well adapted to delude men to their destruction. It is brought among you by men who are troubling your minds with this novel and pernicious notion, seeking to pervert the true gospel of Christ.

8. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

9. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

But even *if* (his word representing the case as barely supposable), if we, or an angel from heaven, were to preach a different gospel from this we have preached to you, let him be accursed! There is no place for another! No other can be supposed possible!——This strong, decisive language fully assumes that in Paul's conviction, the gospel he preached was the very truth of God, too pure and perfect to admit of being superseded by any thing better, or even improved by any thing newer. Moreover, he knew that he had not only received this gospel from God, but had taught it substantially as it was, in accordance with the facts of the case. There was no room open for other teachers, coming after him, to teach this gospel otherwise than he had taught, with any, even the least improvement.——"As we said before"—when myself and my associates were with you in person, preaching this gospel. The word "before," and the reference to others associated with him, taken in antithesis with what he himself ("I") says now, plainly indicate an allusion to their oral preaching on his last visit among them. They had said the same thing then; he himself reaffirms it most solemnly —and as his Greek words imply with heightened emphasis—now. ——"Anathema" is Paul's own word, transferred (not translated)—its sense being—one abhorred, reprobated of God, falling under his awful frown.

10. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

"Persuade" is not the best word, for it comes short of the real sense—which is: Am I working in the interests of men, or of God? Am I doing work for men, or for God? Do I *plead* in behalf of men, or of God? Who is my acknowledged master whose pleasure is my motive and whose work is my joy? Ye can certainly understand this point; Am I seeking to please men? If I were yet pleasing men as I was doing in my Pharisaic life, I could not be the servant of Christ.——We must not forget that Paul's Pharisaic life was essentially the same in its spirit, motive and bearing, as the life of these Judaizing teachers whose influence

upon the Galatian converts he is now combatting. Hence these allusions to himself had also a side-bearing upon them.

11. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

12. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Thus Paul reiterates and reaffirms the vital point with which this letter opens (v. 1), viz., that the gospel he had preached never came to him from man, but from God only. I never learned it (he says) of man. I sat at Gamaliel's feet to learn my Judaism; but at no man's feet to learn my Christianity. All this I received from Jesus Christ himself by immediate revelation. Him I met face to face; his voice came into my ears; from him only did I originally learn this gospel, and from him came my commission to preach it.——These points became doubly vital to the purpose of this epistle because those Judaizers had been traducing his apostolic authority, representing that he preached only a second-hand gospel; was never in the school of Christ; was not one of the twelve disciples. These points, whether put forward openly or by implication and insinuation, Paul felt it incumbent upon himself to meet squarely.

13. For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:

14. And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

For ye must have heard what I am now obliged to repeat—as to my early life in the Jewish religion. (The word "conversation" is in the now obsolete sense—one's manner of life, the whole drift and tenor of it). Ye know I was then persecuting the church of God with extreme, excessive, and even malignant zeal; I was making it desolate, doing my utmost to destroy it.

"Profited" in Judaism;—but "profited" is not the best word now for Paul's meaning. This is better expressed by proficiency than by profit. Certainly he does not mean that he found or made any profit in it, either to himself or to others. The word he used suggests that he *struck forward*. The action of the oarsman, putting each stroke in advance, and thus dashing on, seems to underlie the etymology and significance of the Greek word.*——I was thus striking ahead of many of my own age in my nation—the word "equals" touching only the point of age.——Being excessively zealous for the traditions of the fathers of my people. This was the animus of the Pharisaism of that day—devotion to traditionary lore under which they made void even the law of God.

*προκοπτω.

What Christ brings against them as their capital error (Matt. 15: 6 and Mark 7: 13), Paul here confesses to have been the very soul of the system.

15. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by his grace,

16. To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

17. Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

Noticeably, Paul sees the final cause of his own conversion in the good pleasure of God. Even from his mother's womb, God had set him apart—had fixed his eye and hand upon him and put him in unconscious training for his life-work. In due season, God had called him through his grace—by virtue of his loving good pleasure, merely and only.——"To reveal his Son *within* me"—better than merely "in"—*i. e.*, to my inner soul, speaking to my very heart; to the end, moreover, that I might preach him among the Gentiles.——Straightway, on hearing this voice from God, through his revealing Son, I held no consultation with frail mortals—"flesh and blood" representing men as contrasted with God, and moreover, considered as frail, imperfect, unreliable. The exact sense of this phrase—"flesh and blood"—considered as authority for truth revealed, may be seen in Christ's words to Peter (Matt. 16: 17): "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven." Alike Peter and Paul were not taught by "flesh and blood." Paul declined to seek such instruction; Peter did not have it.——Ye might suppose (Paul would intimate) that I should hasten at once to place myself under the instruction of the apostles, long time before me in the school of Christ. I did no such thing; but went at once away from Damascus into Arabia; and when I returned, it was not to Jerusalem but to Damascus.——Precisely to what part of vast, indefinite Arabia Paul went has never been ascertained. As to his special object in going we are left, perhaps, mainly to conjecture, save that the scope of argument here suggests strongly that he turned entirely away from Jerusalem, and away from all contact with apostles and the earlier Christians, to spend time in communion with God, and to realize that discipline of prayer and meditation, coupled with special revelations from God, which would prepare him for his great life-work. Whether he was moved toward this preparatory school by the example of Moses and Elijah, each of whom had experience in the solitudes of Arabia, we can only conjecture.

18. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

19. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

The three years spent there, date probably from the time of his conversion.—"To *see* Peter"; but Paul's word "see" contemplates making his personal acquaintance. The older manuscripts give, "to make the acquaintance of Cephas," using his Aramean rather than his Roman name.——One reason for so short a stay may perhaps be indicated in Acts 9: 29: "They went about to slay him." However long he might otherwise have remained, considerations of personal safety cut short his visit so that he could show the Galatian brethren that he did not receive his knowledge of the gospel scheme from Peter, nor indeed from any other of the prominent gospel teachers. He saw none other but James, whom Luke's history continually locates at Jerusalem.

As to the very complicated question of the identity of this James, see the discussion in my introduction to the Epistle of James.

20. Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.

This affirmation of his own veracity, implying the solemn oath, suggests painfully that those Judaizing teachers had not scrupled to charge the apostle with falsehood.

21. Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;

22. And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ:

These regions became the theater of his early missionary tours, being adjacent to Tarsus, his birthplace, and to Antioch, where he and Barnabas spent a full year in very successful gospel labors (Acts 11: 25, 26). But to the churches of Judea he remained personally unknown. They were hearing from time to time by current report that he who was formerly their most virulent persecutor was then preaching the faith he had sought to uproot; and they gave God the glory for this marvelous conversion.

23. But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.

24. And they glorified God in me.

The purpose of the apostle in giving so much personal history, we should bear in mind, was to show how little he had learned from the other apostles and how exclusively his apostolic training had come by direct revelation from God. It were unpardonable to attribute this showing to any vainglory—to any desire to exalt himself in comparison with the twelve original apostles. Public duty compelled him to refute the slanders of men who were traducing his name and influence before the Galatian churches and to sustain his apostolic authority that he might save those churches.

CHAPTER II.

Paul concludes his statement of personal history, showing particularly what transpired during his visit at Jerusalem; how the question of circumcising Titus became a test case (v. 1–3); how Judaizing men, even then, were alert and inquisitive (v. 4, 5); how he withstood them (v. 6); how the favor of God, manifested upon his labors among the Gentiles, won for him the confidence and indorsement of the leading apostles (v. 7–10); that he withstood even Peter at Antioch for his concessions to the Judaizers against his previous policy and despite of his real convictions (v. 11–13); recites his argument with Peter (v. 14–16), and debates the main question between salvation by works of law and salvation by the cross of Christ (v. 17–21).

1. Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with *me* also.

When? Fourteen years, reckoned from what point? With little doubt, from the point of his conversion, this portion of his life being that which he is reporting to his Galatian brethren. He thinks it important to show them in considerable detail where and how this time was spent in order to refute the slanders of those Jews who had traduced his apostleship.——This visit to Jerusalem is manifestly the same which Luke has recorded (Acts 15), where the very question pending between Paul and his Galatian converts was brought before the apostles and elders; viz., whether converts from the Gentiles must needs be circumcised and subjected to the entire law of Moses as conditions of salvation.

2. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

This special direction from the Spirit indicates that the question at issue was of vital moment.——There, said Paul, I laid before the brethren the gospel I was preaching to Gentiles, *i. e.*, on the point then specially pending—that of circumcising Gentile converts and subjecting them to the law given through Moses. I did this privately to the leading men, adopting this method lest I should fail of success in my gospel work. The force of Jewish prejudice was so great that I found it necessary to move carefully and carry the convictions of their leaders before the fanaticism of the populace should be aroused and diverting influences set in too powerfully to be controlled by reason. This, let us notice, was not at all a time-serving policy; it indicated no lack of firmness, but was wisely shaped to get truth into the minds of the men who must control public opinion, before the violent passions and prejudices of the masses should render cool consideration

and right judgment practically impossible. Paul was a wise man.

3. But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

4. And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

5. To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

"But" (the Greek "αλλα" with this strong adversative sense)—but, despite of the delicacy and difficulty of this great issue, I carried my point (as you will see), for Titus who went up with me, well known to be a Greek convert and therefore not circumcised in infancy, was not compelled to be circumcised. The leading men at Jerusalem conceded this main question and made no demand for his circumcision. This was precisely a test case.—The question was forced then to a decision, for false brethren were there who insinuated themselves into our Christian communion to spy out our practice in this respect and wrest from us this freedom from the yoke of Jewish bondage, to which freedom we were entitled under the law of Christ. But on the point of subjecting Gentile converts to the Mosaic law, we made not the least concession, not for one hour, that we might hold fast the truth of the gospel.

6. But of those who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person: for they who seemed *to be somewhat* in conference added nothing to me:

7. But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as *the gospel* of the circumcision *was* unto Peter;

8. (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles;)

9. And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

10. Only *they would* that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

In the first clause of v. 6, the sentence beginning—"Of those," etc., soon changes its construction to this form: "For they who seemed," etc.—a break and change of construction not infrequent in Paul's style of writing.——"Seemed to be somewhat," does not imply that they appeared to be more or better than they were. The phrase here, as in v. 2, where the same Greek words are

translated—"them who are of reputation," denotes only the leading, prominent men in the church. Those men taught me nothing new; added nothing to my previous knowledge of the gospel or to my convictions as to the main point now in issue. However great or honored they may have been, was of no consequence to me. God accepts no man's person, nor do I. High position neither makes nor unmakes gospel truth. So far from yielding my convictions and changing my opinions out of deference to the great men at Jerusalem, I stood my ground firmly and carried my point. For when they saw that the gospel to uncircumcised Gentiles had been committed to me, as the gospel to circumcised Jews had been to Peter; when they saw that God had wrought through his manifested Spirit to sanction my labors among the Gentiles, even as he had to bless Peter in converting Jews, then, like honest Christian men, they yielded the main point; gave to myself and Barnabas their right hand of fellowship to go to the uncircumcised Gentiles, and to others to go to circumcised Jews. Even their chief apostle, James, known as the honored pastor of the Jerusalem Church, Cephas also (Peter), and John, the beloved disciple—men recognized as pillars in the church—all these men gave us their unqualified sanction to go to the Gentiles and preach a gospel that made no demand upon them whatever for circumcision and subjection to the law of Moses as conditions of salvation. In giving us this hearty, unqualified indorsement, they only stipulated that we should remember the poor—as to which I had always been as prompt as themselves.

11. But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

12. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

13. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

Another important historical fact, fully in point as to the main question. Paul speaking in his own first person, would say: So far from borrowing my gospel truth or practice from Peter, I was obliged to dissent sharply from his practices and remonstrate with him to his face. This occurred when he came to visit the brethren at Antioch. Peter had previously risen above his caste-notions, and had eaten with uncircumcised Gentile converts; but when certain brethren came from James, the recognized champion of Jewish exclusiveness, Peter, fearing for his standing with James and his party, withdrew from his Gentile brethren and stood aloof from their table and from their Christian fellowship. He did this, not because either the truth of the gospel or his own convictions of it had changed, but because he timidly and unwor-

thily violated his conscience through fear of losing caste with prominent men at Jerusalem. This was culpable dissimulation. It swept along other Jews and even Barnabas in the strong current of popular Jewish feeling.

14. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before *them* all, if thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

15. We *who are* Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

16. Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

When I saw them thus dishonest, swerving so manifestly from the true gospel rule and from their own real convictions, I said to Cephas (so the older authorities) before them all—*i. e.*, in the presence of all the rest: If thou, a Jew by birth, dost conform to Gentile usages (as thou hast heretofore done) and dost not hold thyself bound to adhere to Jewish usage, why dost thou compel men who are born Gentiles to Judaize—*i. e.*, to be circumcised? Pursuing the same argument (vs. 15, 16): We, Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners, knowing that a man is never justified by works of law but only by faith in Christ, even we have believed in Christ, that we may be justified by faith, not by works, for we know perfectly that by works of law no human soul can be justified. Thus our assured belief in Jesus only and our personal reception of him as our only ground of justification should by no means be thrown into the shade, much less should it be virtually belied and overruled by representing circumcision as essential to salvation.

17. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, *is* therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.

18. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

The supposition made here—essentially this—that gratuitous justification gives license to sin, has its parallel in Paul to the Romans (6: 1): "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" and brings forth there the same indignant, intense denial as here. If we sin under this system of justification by Christ only, can it be charged that Christ becomes the minister of sin—its promoter, the occasion of our more easily indulging ourselves in transgression? Never! God forbid! For if I build

again what I have once thrown down, I convict myself of sin; I show myself to be at heart a transgressor. That is, if I build up again the system of salvation by works of law, having once thrown it down by the doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ only, I convict myself of sin. This, we must suppose, is the purposed application of the argument to the case of Peter, then in hand. Had Peter, possibly, become more easy as to his conscience under the doctrine that justification (pardon for sin) comes so readily through the blood of Christ, and had he therefore become lax in this matter of concession to the Jewish prejudices of his brother James? If so he deserved this indignant rebuke!

19. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

It may be a question whether this v. 19, and also vs. 20, 21, should be considered as part of Paul's actual address to Peter, beginning in the middle of v. 14. This is certainly supposeable. The strain of remark and mode of address continue unchanged to the end of this chapter.——The point is not vital to the sense; for if he did not say all this to Peter at that time, he certainly said it to the Galatian brethren; he said it to all mankind. These verses all bear to the same point and fill out this one great argument. ——"For through the law itself I have died to the law (as my hope of salvation) that I might live unto God." The law itself utterly annihilated all my former hope of justification. For it demanded perfect obedience; in its own words; "Continuing in all things written in the law to do them" (Deut. 27: 26)—so that I plainly saw my doom of death there; my hopes all perished!——This put an end to my old Pharisaic life (through righteousness by the law), and left me to seek my life in God's other way, viz., in Christ—which I must now proceed to unfold. ——Let it be definitely noted that our authorized version—"I *am* dead"—fails to translate Paul's words closely, for Paul said, I *was* dead; I had previously died to the law by the very application and force of law itself.

20. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

21. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Combined with the hopelessness of being saved by mere law, there came in another power to slay my old self-righteous self. This was the cross of Christ. When I saw that, my old Pharisaic life died within me. The crucifying of Christ effectually crucified me. Because he died, I died. I saw in that death what put an end forever to my old life of reliance on my good works for

salvation. I found in it also a new and marvelously quickening power that lifted me into a new life toward God. It is now no longer the old *I* that lives, but it is Christ that lives in me.—— Paul wrote his word I ("Εγω") fully out and thus made it emphatic. In our English idiom we can not express this emphatic sense of Paul's Greek better than to say: The living one—the center and seat of this life—is no longer I, but Christ in me.—— Amplifying and still expanding his thought, he said, What life I now live in the flesh (in this present world) I live in and by means of the faith which reposes in the Son of God, who hath loved me and given himself to die for me. From this faith comes all my life-power.——I do not set aside the grace of God—do not displace that wonderful redemption; but I should do this if I were to go back to Judaism for my spiritual life and hope, *for* ("*gar*"), (referring to the implied supposition which is here suggested) if righteousness were through law, then Christ died without cause. His death was needless; there was no occasion for it whatever. And a merely superfluous sacrifice of the life-blood of Jesus should have been spared.

My system therefore (Paul would say) does not disown and rule out the great love of God in the gift of his Son, but infinitely exalts and glorifies it.

In this passage the question arises whether the life Paul speaks of is that of sanctification or justification. This question should be determined by Paul's course of thought and of argument. Applying this test we are compelled to answer: To justification, and not specially to sanctification. He is not speaking of that sustaining grace by which the Christian triumphs over temptation, rising above sin and living a new spiritual life; but rather of that life before God of which pardon, justification in the eye of law, is the vital element. His thought is on the two contrasted lives—the Pharisaic life of dependence on works for acceptance before God, and the Christian which depends for acceptance on Jesus alone.

CHAPTER III.

In this chapter the apostle begins to open the great argument of this epistle, the central idea being that the gospel scheme came from God first of all in the form of *promise* on his part, which calls for responsive *faith* on man's part. Through divine promise and human faith came the gifts of the Spirit in that Christian age; through similar divine promise and human faith came one of the first clear intimations of gospel blessings given

to Abraham and to his seed. All this is in strong contrast with the opposite system which makes salvation depend on circumcision and works of law. This contrast is kept steadily and strongly before the mind throughout the argumentative portion of this epistle (chaps. 3 and 4.)

To begin: The Galatians have been fascinated into great folly that they should become blind as to Jesus and his cross (v. 1); forgetting that the gifts of the Spirit came not through works of law but through faith (v. 2); strangely assuming that what was begun so auspiciously in the Spirit could be carried out to its consummation by the flesh (v. 3). Did the gifts of the Spirit and the miracles wrought among them come through works of law, or through faith (v. 4, 5)? Abraham also received all his blessings through faith which became the ground of his acceptance before God (v. 6); so also to all believers (v. 7): prophetic Scripture had anticipated this method of salvation (vs. 8, 9). Over against this, the scheme of salvation through works of law must leave all men under the curse (v. 10), for only by faith can lost men live (v. 11); for the law rests not on faith but on doings (v. 12). Christ lifts the curse of the law from lost men by bearing it himself so that the promised gifts of the Spirit are through faith (vs. 13, 14). Covenants even between men, once ratified, remain unchanged (v. 15); God promised blessings to Abraham and to his seed by covenant and promise, which the law, subsequently made, can in nowise annul (vs. 16–18); yet law serves the purpose of manifesting sin, but falls entirely below the great covenant of promise inasmuch as it came through a human medium (vs. 19, 20). Law subserves its lower purpose inasmuch as it reveals sin and enforces conviction, and also impresses man's need of a Savior (vs. 21–25). Faith makes men children of God; identifies them with Christ in the great communion of Abraham's seed and makes them all, equally with him, heirs of promise (vs. 26–29).

1. O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

Amazed at such folly, Paul likens it to a fascination or charm of witchery which had sealed their eyes to Christ crucified though this had transpired, as it were, in their very presence, so that they seemed as men blind to the great gospel truths involved in the cross of Christ. How easily, if only they would, might they have dispelled this bewitching fascination by lifting their eyes up to this crucified Jesus, almost present to their eye of sense! How could they be so blind, so void of understanding! What could have wrought upon them this strange fascination?

The best authorities omit the clause "That ye should not obey the truth," not because the sentiment is bad or inept here; but because the oldest manuscripts omit it, and it has probably been interpolated. The omission of this clause neither changes the sense nor weakens the force of the sentence.

2. This only would I learn of you; Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

3. Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

4. Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if *it be* yet in vain.

"This only do I wish to learn of you"—for this one point ought to decide the entire question: Did ye receive the supernatural gifts of the Spirit by means of works of law, or by means of faith through the hearing of the gospel? Ye will remember that according to the promise of the Lord (Mark 16: 17, 18) "these signs did follow them that believed"—God's own attestation to the presence of his Spirit and to the reality of this gospel salvation. These supernatural gifts which appear all along the history of apostolic labors (*e. g.*, 1 Cor. 12: 1–11) were not specially of the invisible sort, but of the visible. They were purposely open and palpable demonstrations of the presence and power of the Holy Ghost. Did those Judaizing teachers bring with them such divine attestations? When ye first heard the gospel from my lips and from the lips of my fellow-laborers, did these signs come through any works of law whatsoever, or only through faith? Let the answer to this point be conclusive.

Another point: Ye can not but know that flesh is weakness, and that Spirit is power. Ye began your gospel life in the power of the Spirit. In and through the divine Spirit, its great and deep foundations were laid in your transformed hearts and lives. And now, do ye think to carry up the great spiritual temple to its finished consummation by means of the weakness of flesh? Are ye so infatuated as to suppose that ye can finish by means of weak flesh what God began so auspiciously by the might of his Spirit?——Moreover, in common with Christian converts generally in this age, ye have suffered persecution for Christ. Shall this be all in vain? Can ye afford to forfeit your Christian birthright, bought at such cost, and get nothing but loss in return?—If indeed it must prove utterly in vain by your abandoning the gospel after having suffered so much in its behalf, how sad the case!

5. He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

This carries the question of v. 2 back to those who first preached to them the gospel. They were God's ministers for communicating those precious and witnessing gifts of the Spirit. When they laid hands upon you to signify the imparting of these gifts, and when they wrought miracles in some all-potent name, did they invoke circumcision, or did they invoke Christ? Did they say—Let these heaven-sent blessings come through the law of Moses; or were they very particular to invoke these blessings always and only in the name of the risen Jesus? Consider, be-

loved brethren, and then as wise men, pass your judgment upon what I say.

6. Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

7. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

8. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

9. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

With exquisite pertinence and telling force, Paul carries back his argument to the case of Abraham—the acknowledged father of all believers. The men who had brought in among the churches of Galatia these new and pernicious doctrines were *Jews*—Jews who revered and almost adored Abraham; but were they children of Abraham? Did they, as he did, believe God, and had their faith, like his, been accounted to them for righteousness? Alas, this faith was the very thing they had not; this system of justification was the thing they were laboring with utmost effort and skill to subvert! Hence Paul confronts them thus vigorously and unanswerably with the example of their great national father. *He* believed God, and this faith of his became the ground of his acceptance as righteous. Those and only those who believe as he did can be his children. Those Judaizing men who discard his faith and put circumcision in its place, are apostate from his household.——Go back to your own ancient scriptures and read for yourselves. That scripture, personating to us the very voice of God, prophetically foreseeing that God justifies Gentile as well as Jew through faith and not through works, preached this very gospel more than a thousand years beforehand, in those words to Abraham: "In thee shall all nations be blessed;"—in *thee*, including, of course, as Paul will soon show, his offspring who were specially embraced and enfolded in this promise. Yet in the thought of Paul, this offspring were of and like Abraham in the spirit rather than in the flesh, the virtue passing down from him not in his blood, but in his faith. Thus all men of faith, true believers, are blessed along with their great believing father and on the same basis of faith.

The reader should not fail to note that Paul speaks of "the Scripture" as itself foreseeing prophetically what was doing in the gospel age, and as itself preaching the gospel in words which the historic Scriptures give us as from the mouth of God himself. Nothing could prove more decisively that Paul heard and recognized in those ancient Scriptures the very voice of God. He practically believed that "all Scripture was heaven-inspired—breathed into holy men by the spiritual breath of the Almighty."

10. For as many as are of the works of the law are under

the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

11. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

12. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

Briefly but forcibly Paul describes and names the two opposite classes as those who rely upon works of law on the one hand, and those who are of faith on the other. The former seek their salvation in circumcision and the Mosaic law of perfect obedience: the latter hope for justification through faith in Christ only. Paul then proceeds to show that all those men of works of law are under curse, unless their obedience has been always invariably perfect, for so the terms of salvation by law run: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them" (Deut. 27: 26). On the basis of law this is the sole condition of acceptance before God, and Paul might safely have appealed to every man's conscience —Does your life, in the light of your own conscience, meet that one supreme and vital condition? This he *might* have said; but he leaves such an appeal to their conscience unspoken; and proceeds to appeal again to Scripture for his proof that no man is justified before God on mere law; for, according to Scripture, "The just man lives by faith;"—which of course implies, by *faith only;* by faith and not by works of law.

But to clinch this argument from the Scriptures, he proceeds: —"The law is not of faith;" the law never even names faith at all as a ground of righteousness before God, but on the contrary its doctrine is evermore this and this only: "The man that *doeth* them shall live in and by means of them." The law treats of *doings* and of nothing else. It accepts men's doings if only they are perfect. It knows nothing about faith in the place of doings.

The passage quoted (v. 11) appears original in Hab. 2: 4, and is quoted in Romans 1: 17 and Heb. 10: 38. It is a nice question whether to connect the words "of faith" with "justified" or with "shall live." In the former case the construction will be —The man justified of faith shall live; in the latter, The just man shall live of his faith. Grammatically either is admissible. But the original Hebrew (Hab. 2: 4) decidedly favors the latter; which also best meets the exigencies of Paul's argument and best presents the antithesis between living by faith and living by works of law; and therefore should be preferred.

Verse 12 continues the argument with the Greek ("de") in the sense of *but* rather than "and";——*But*, ye will observe, it is most plain that the law is not of faith—does not work on that principle at all, but only on the principle of doing: "He that doeth these things shall live by them"—*i. e.*, by means of them. Ye

may see this in Lev. 18: 5. Paul has the same argument and doctrine in Rom. 10: 5.

13. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:

14. That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

How men are ever saved under such a law, it is important now to show. The curse for its violation having fallen upon all, how can any man ever be saved?——The answer is—In and through the gospel and by this only. It begins with saying "Christ." "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of broken law by becoming himself a curse" (a cursed one) in our behalf and stead—in proof of which, at this point, Paul appeals to that ancient Scripture which declares every one cursed who is hanged upon a tree (Deut. 21: 22, 23). So Jesus was held and deemed accursed before the Jewish people by his death upon the cross. By that death he became accursed under the doctrine of their law, and Paul testifies, *became himself a curse for us*—in our behalf and stead, so that the curse was lifted from us when it was assumed and borne by himself. At this point he enters into no further detail as to the doctrine of Christ's atoning death, but proceeds to say that by means of this atoning death for us, the blessings promised to and through Abraham come upon the Gentiles so that we receive the promised Spirit through faith.*

15. Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though *it be* but a man's covenant, yet *if it be* confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.

The passage commencing here being specially difficult, calls for careful and thorough examination.——First we must, if possible, reach the true sense of the words—"I speak as a man."† The authorized version is unexceptionable, but leaves the question still open;—in *what respect* after the manner of men?

Looking for other cases of the usage of this Pauline phrase, we read (Rom. 3: 5): "But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?—I speak after the manner of man—God forbid!"——which seems to mean; I speak here necessarily from the human stand-point; I speak therefore with bated breath, reverently; for how does it become one of mortal flesh to pass a

* The bearing of this passage upon the scriptural doctrine of Christ's atonement, as also the whole question of atonement, have been treated in a special essay appended to my volume on "The Epistle to the Hebrews."

†κατα ανθρωπον.

judgment upon the ways of the infinite God!——Again (1 Cor. 9: 8): "Who feeds the flock and eats not of the milk of the flock? Do I say these things *as a man, i. e.*, on merely human authority, or does not the law say the same"?——And yet again (1 Cor. 15: 32): "If *after the manner of man*, I have fought with wild beasts at Ephesus"—the phrase here being apparently designed to qualify the strong figure "fighting with wild beasts"—which, dropping the figure, meant only men as savage as they. If, humanly speaking, I fought with lions and tigers.——These cases, it will be noticed, exhibit some variety in its shades of meaning. Guided by Paul's own usage we may take his meaning here to be this: I have occasion to speak of God's covenant with Abraham; and therefore, first of all, I bring an analogy from covenants made between man and man. This is looking at the case *from the human stand-point.* With our eye on covenants made by man with his fellow-man, we readily derive principles which apply legitimately to covenants in which God is one party. So Ellicott says: "An argument from human analogies, and which he uses as man might." The point he would illustrate is this: Though a covenant were merely human as to the parties concerned, yet when once ratified ("confirmed") no man disannuls, or, of his own motion, adds any thing more. It must stand in its full strength with no right in either party to change its conditions.

16. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

The difficulty in this verse is that Paul seems to build an argument upon the word "seed" [offspring], assuming that it must be singular (grammatically) in sense because it is so in form; whereas by usage it is unquestionably a noun of multitude—*i. e.*, though singular in form, yet plural in sense. Some critics have thought this argument so bad as virtually to impeach Paul's inspiration if not even his honesty. The case, therefore, is sufficiently grave to call for thorough treatment.

Let it then be noted that the promises made to Abraham were in substance repeated many times; and also that they comprised not one blessing only but many. See Gen. 12: 7 and 13: 15 and 15: 18 and 17: 7, 8; also 22: 18; also as renewed to Isaac, Gen. 26: 3–5; and again to Jacob, Gen. 28: 13–15.——The leading points embraced were—(*a.*) The land of Canaan; (*b.*) A numerous posterity; (*c.*) Blessings upon the nations in and through his seed. Of these Paul's thought is specially upon the latter—the blessings that come to the nations of the earth through his seed. Canaan and Abraham's numerous lineal posterity were merely subsidiary to this last great promise and did not come directly into Paul's argument.

We are now to inquire for Paul's real thought. It is therefore specially legitimate to study what else he says bearing upon the meaning of this word "seed." The reader should carefully note

(*a.*) that in v. 19 Paul unquestionably thinks of the Messiah as being "the seed that should come, to whom the promise was made;" and also (*b.*) that v. 29 holds unquestionably that "those who are Christ's (*i. e.*, by faith) are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." Therefore he did not mean to say that the word "seed" included but one individual and *that* one, the Messiah. It was certainly in his thought that all Christ's true children are embraced in this seed of Abraham. Indeed his argument requires this enlarged and modified sense, and is entirely inconclusive upon any other construction.

We have now in hand the key to Paul's meaning. He meant to say that those great promises to Abraham (*a.*) did certainly include the Messiah to come lineally from Abraham: (*b.*) that the Messiah was not only there, embraced in the mass of that numerous posterity, but was the center and soul of that promise —in such a sense central that without him, all else could be of no account. Without him, no blessings could come forth out of Abraham's seed upon the Gentiles; without him, we may almost say, no gift of Canaan; no birth of even Isaac; no numerous posterity brought into covenant with God and upheld through twenty centuries under perpetual ministrations of Providence and grace till the fullness of time for the Messiah's manifestation should come. In Paul's view the promised Messiah was so central, was so entirely the living germ in this seed-corn of the world's harvest of mercies, that all things else seem to fade out of mind save as they come in through a spiritual union with him by faith. All else, ever to be included under this seed of Abraham, comes in only through this union with Christ. They hold in and under him. Until his title and his relations are determined, they are of no account. Of rights anterior to Christ, they have none.——So much as to the real thought of the apostle in this passage.

We have then, it may be supposed, Paul's real meaning; but yet the question recurs;—What of his grammar? What can be said for his apparent argument built upon the word "seed" as meaning one when in actual usage it means a multitude?——Perhaps this; that he found this peculiar word, singular in form, though by usage a noun of multitude, to be specially felicitous for his purpose at that moment—which was to show that the prominent central idea in those promises was a unit—one great unity, viz., that of Christ, the person of the Messiah. It enabled him to emphasize this remarkable unity; it enabled him to set forth that those who held under Abraham through God's covenant with him held only and entirely under and by means of the one great offspring—the promised Christ. They did not hold as many individuals but as one body, one totality, one whole though made up of many individuals. The covenant meant Abraham and his one offspring, Christ, as its chief significance. It meant Christ before it could mean his believing people, because they held altogether under him. Through him and him first and chief were all the nations to be blessed. And because all blessings included under

this covenant came through Christ, therefore faith became the one condition of their inheriting under their Redeemer. By faith they were made one with him in their title to this promised inheritance of blessings. It was, apparently, to make all these points vividly clear that Paul emphasizes the (grammatically) singular form of this word "seed."——It may be noticed that the argument from the singular form of this word "seed" is not alluded to again. It is touched (so it would seem) only as a suggestive illustration, and not by any means relied on as a staple argument.

Another exposition of this v. 16 has been advanced, which, if admissible, would obviate the grammatical and logical objections above considered; viz., that Paul does not refer to any particular passage in the Old Testament, which contains those words, but avails himself of this compendious mode of speaking as a convenient formula for summing up the entire teachings of the Scripture on this subject. ——As to the word seed (sperma) the singular and the plural differ in this. The singular denotes unity of class; here, all who are *of faith*, and thus *of Christ* (v. 29); the plural denotes a plurality of classes:—in the present application, all shades of unbelievers and of fleshly relations to Abraham—sons of Ishmael, Esau, etc. Therefore Paul would say:—Search the entire Old Testament Scriptures; the promises all run in one strain; they make no mention of plurality of seeds—never recognize one spiritual seed and another natural one; but always one seed in character and this character, that of faith—those who follow in the faith of Abraham. Now therefore as the whole Old Testament Scriptures limit the promises to the one believing seed, nothing is left for other classes of men not believing, though lineally descended from Abraham, *e. g.*, through Ishmael. Hence this argument shuts off all those who are not of faith but are of works only.

The staple objection to this exposition of v. 16 is this:—that Paul does seem very manifestly to refer to a definite promise made of God to Abraham, and made in very definite words. This reference is too plain to be denied. Paul states what he did say and what he did *not* say, and insists that the one seed—only one—meant precisely Christ.——This proposed exposition presents a very just view of the Old Testament doctrine as to being heirs of Abraham by means of faith, but fails to relieve the objection against Paul's grammar and the logic apparently built upon it.

If it be objected that this construction of those Abrahamic promises puts more Messianic meaning into them than Abraham could have dreamed of, or that it makes that meaning more prominent than he could have seen it, the answer may be twofold: (*a.*) What then? What if Abraham did not take in the full sense of those promises? Would this fact rule out all the significance which he failed to get?—(*b.*) But even this concession need not be made, for Jesus doubtless knew, better than any of us, how much Abraham understood; and he said—"Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he *saw* it and was glad." (John 8: 56.)

17. And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

18. For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.

Dropping not only the argument of v. 16, but even the verse itself, and taking up the point made in v. 15 as if v. 16 were not there, he says—The covenant with Abraham, once ratified, the law given through Moses four hundred and thirty years after could by no means disanuul so as to make its promises void. If it had been a man's covenant merely, running between man and man, it could not be annulled or even modified at the will of either party. How much more must a covenant, shaped and proposed by the eternal, changeless God stand in all its elements unchanged! —The special point to be sustained in this argument is that the law of works, given through Moses, could by no means supersede the law or covenant of promise, given to Abraham and his posterity. The priority of the Abrahamic covenant places it entirely above and beyond any power of the Mosaic covenant to annul it.

Add yet another argument for the perpetuity of the covenant with Abraham. Compared with the covenant of works given through Moses, its blessings come to man on totally different conditions. For if the inheritance [of blessings under the covenant with Abraham] had been a thing *of law*, it could not have been a thing *of promise*, for law demands perfect obedience as its central condition, but promise calls for faith and contemplates gratuitous mercy given to those of faith. What is of law, therefore, is not of promise; but God built his covenant with Abraham precisely upon promise.

19. Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

20. Now a mediator is not a *mediator* of one, but God is one.

This passage involves two main questions: (*a.*) What is the use of the law? (*b.*) What does Paul propose to make out of the circumstance that the law came through the hand of a Mediator? What is his argument?

(*a.*) The law was superadded because of transgressions; to show what God required; what was morally right; and consequently to give men a clearer, deeper sense of sin. This would conduce to real conviction of sin and of its guilt, and consequently to show that salvation through perfect obedience to law is hopeless, and that therefore all men must need a Redeemer for their salvation. For this practical result, law was to be in force till the Messiah, the promised Seed, should come. Paul does not mean

to deny that the obligation of God's moral law is perpetual; but only to say that until Christ should come, it would serve to convict men of sin and so prepare them to welcome a Redeemer.

(*b.*) The second point: What *is* Paul's argument as to the "Mediator?" is specially difficult. It is more than probable that Paul felt the extreme delicacy of this point in its bearing upon the sensitive prejudices of the Jews in favor of Moses, and therefore entirely forebore even to name Moses at all, though he names Abraham and keeps him constantly before the mind. But he not only avoids the mention of Moses by name, but touches very gently upon this argument, not more than half developing its cardinal points and its real significance. I see not the least reason to question that his ultimate argument is this. The scheme of faith came to Abraham from the very lips of God himself with no "mesites" ["Mediator"]—no intervening man or angel between. Over against this, the law and its whole system of rites came through angels and the one mesites, viz., Moses. The latter, therefore, must be quite inferior to the former.

Now let it be considered: (1.) "Mediator" here is not at all in the sense of *intercessor*, as when used in the Epistle to the Hebrews of Jesus Christ (Heb. 8: 6, and 9: 15, and 12: 24, and also 1 Tim. 2: 5). It is only a messenger, an organ of communication between one party and another; an agent who passes, goes, from the party sending to the party receiving the supposed communication.—(2.) This "*mesites*" [mediator] was doubtless Moses.—(3.) The law was given from God to men not alone through Moses, but through the ministration of angels. On this point we have the testimony of Stephen (Acts 7: 38, 53); of the writer to the Hebrews (2: 2), and apparently of Moses himself (Deut. 33: 2). But in the giving of promise to Abraham, no agency of angel or other internuncius [messenger] is ever alluded to. God was the one only revealer. This fact clothed the system of salvation through faith and through promise with surpassing dignity and glory.—(4.) We must now meet the question: What is the meaning of the phrase—"A mediator is not *of one?*" It is unquestionably elliptical, requiring some word or words to be supplied to express its sense clearly. Perhaps the most obvious sense is—a "mesites" has no place where there is but one party; for by the very significance of his name and mission, he goes between one party and another, conveying some message from one to the other.——The objections to this explanation are (*a.*) that it is too obvious to need statement, and (*b.*) that it has no apparent bearing on Paul's argument.

A slight modification will bring out a construction free from these and perhaps from all grave objections. The *mesites* has no place where there is but one party concerned in revealing the message—the author bringing it himself. *E. g.*, when God speaks to the human soul with his own voice directly, no mesites has place; there is no occasion for his services; he has no mission there. Such was the case between God and Abraham. Here

there was one revealing party and one only. This was God. He was *the* one.

21. *Is* the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

22. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

23. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

Is law then hostile to promise, an antagonistic force working against the system of promise? Never; far from it! Both work toward the same ultimate end—the salvation of men—as you may readily see, "for" (gar) if a law had been revealed, able of itself to give life—the real life of salvation—and so to become a practicable agency for saving men, then, verily, justification might and would have been through law alone. In that case there would be no need of faith and promise to bring salvation to men.

"But the scripture," *i. e.*, the doctrine of scripture, considered as the voice of God (as in v. 8) hath shut up all the race—all mankind (the neuter gender—"all things"—indicating here the totality of the race) under sin in order to prepare the way for promise and faith in Jesus to be given to believers. The first word in v. 23 should not be "but"—the Greek particle "de" being simply continuative, expanding, and reaffirming, but not suggesting any disjunctive or antithetic force. Read therefore: Now, be it considered, Before faith came, we were hedged round about, walled in as prisoners in a dungeon behind gates and bars, imprisoned in darkness and under condemnation, shut up to the one only hope, viz., through the system of faith in Jesus which was ultimately to be revealed.

24. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

25. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

Hence you will see that "the law became our schoolmaster" ("pedagogue" is the Greek word), one who leads the pupil by the hand, to conduct us to Christ that we may be justified by faith in him.*

Faith having come, *i. e.*, fully to light so that the system of salvation through faith in Christ is really understood, we no longer need law as a pedagogue to bring us into Christian knowl-

* The Greek student would notice the peculiar strength of the preposition before the word Christ, which is not προσ (to or unto), but εισ in the sense of *into; i. e.*, who so leads him *to* Christ that he really enters *into* him in the sense of a most intimate relationship, real communion and participation in his fullness of blessings.

edge, since we already have it. We need not press Paul's words to make them signify that the moral law is no longer in force and no longer has a place in the Christian system. He means only that it has fulfilled its function as a pedagogue to introduce us to the gospel scheme—that scheme being already fully revealed.

26. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

27. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

28. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

29. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

The argument indicated by the word "for" (gar) in v. 26 would have been more obvious if the translation had marked distinctly the advance as we progress from boys (paides) under a pedagogue to the condition of *sons* (uioi)—(better than "children"), for we become "sons of God" through faith in Christ Jesus, and therefore are no longer boys in the lower grade of common-school training. That we are in this sense "sons" is plain, *for* (gar) as many as have been baptized into Christ—*i. e.*, brought by baptism into full consecration and devotion to Christ our Lord—"have put on Christ"—this expressive phrase denoting that we have become *like Christ*; have imbibed his spirit; have been transformed morally into his image, so that we not only look like Christ in external life but are really like him in internal spirit as well.

This transformation of character brings all who believe in Christ, not only into one common spirit, but into one common brotherhood of fellowship, in which there is no longer any distinction of Jew and Greek, of bond and free, of male and female; for all are one in Christ Jesus. Being Christ's own sons by means of this complete moral transformation into his image through faith, ye become the true seed of Abraham—he being the father of all them that believe; and thus ye become heirs to all the blessings promised to him and to his spiritual posterity.

The reader will scarcely need to be reminded of the skill of Paul in this entire argument, considering that his opponents—those emissaries from Jerusalem who had been undermining his Galatian converts, were Jews—superlatively Jews—men whose Jewish prejudices and whose admiration for the great names of Jewish history were unbounded. It might be difficult perhaps to say whether they admired Abraham or Moses most. Now we may ask, "What's in a name?" Much every way; and Paul wrote as one who knew it. The name "Abraham" he thoroughly appropriates to his own use and behoof. The whole argument of this chapter turns on the name and character of Abraham as

the father of all believers, the recipient of promises, "the friend of God"—the man with whom God spake face to face with no intermediate organ of communication. As to the man Moses we may properly notice that Paul cautiously refrains from using his name at all. He really has many things to say that mean Moses; and nothing, apparently, would be more natural than to bring out his name in antithesis to that of Abraham; but Paul is carefully reticent as to this name. The sound of it, he well knew, might awaken slumbering associations which would seriously imperil the force of his argument. Paul had read human nature, not in vain.

The points of Paul's argument in this most argumentative chapter may be condensed and arranged thus:

The system of justification *by faith*, in opposition to that by merit or works, *must be true*—(1) *Because the gifts of the Holy Ghost attest it* (v. 2–4). (2) It has been sanctioned by miracles (v. 5). (3) Accords with the manner in which Abraham was justified (v. 6, 7). (4) Fulfills the predictions of Old Testament Scripture, to the effect that salvation was to come *through Christ.* (5) Accords with the entire teaching of the Old Testament as to the justifying nature and power of faith. (6) Is the only system adapted to man as a sinner. Thus the argument becomes complete and unanswerable.

CHAPTER IV.

The condition of the covenant people before their Messiah came is illustrated by the case of a minor before reaching his majority (v. 1, 2)—mere boys and in a certain condition of bondage—until in the fullness of time, God sent forth his Son to redeem them and bring them into the manifest relation of sons (3–5); that they *are* sons is shown by the voice of God's Spirit in their heart, crying, "Father" (v. 6), so that they are no longer servants but sons of God, and therefore heirs of God through Christ (v. 7); having in their former heathen life been in the bondage of superstition to idol gods, how could they turn back again to such bondage? (v. 8, 9). Jewish ceremonial rites are only such bondage, and Paul is therefore afraid for them (v. 10, 11). He refers to the reception they gave him at the first; to the blessedness they then professed to experience, and to their strange relapse (v. 12–16); to the spirit of their seducers (v. 17, 18); addresses them with affectionate entreaty, concluding with an allegorical illustration in which Hagar and Sarah respectively represent the children of the bond-woman and of the free (v. 21–31).

1. Now I say, *That* the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

2. But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

The one purpose of this chapter is to illustrate the inferior condition of the Jew under the Mosaic system and the superior condition of the Christian under the full light of the gospel. It will be seen that this point is thoroughly vital to Paul's main object, viz., to rebuke the folly of going back from the higher state to the lower—the very thing which the Judaizers were persuading the Galatian converts to do.——First, Paul calls their attention very particularly to the case of minors in age, who, his Greek word suggests, are infants—so known sometimes in law-phrase. Both the law of nature and of all society set off certain of the first years of human life as a condition of minority, nonage, subordination, in which the child, though born to an estate or even to a throne, is yet for the time in the condition of a servant only, with no control of his future estate—no legitimate exercise of his inherited prerogatives. Judging from his present life, you could not know him from a servant. He is under guardians and stewards (the sense of Paul's Greek words), men who protect his person from danger, his developing character from untoward influences; and also of men who care for the supply of his physical wants—the economy of the household.

3. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

4. But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

5. To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

The phrase "the elements of the world" should be studied in connection with v. 9 (below) and also with Col. 2: 8, 20, where the same word occurs and in the same sense. It is used of that system of tutelage and training under which God placed the covenant people in their minority—a system made up mainly of ceremonial, ritual observances, good for its own time and purpose, but by no means to be desired after minority gives place to the privileges and prerogatives of mature manhood. Its elements are of lower and subordinate character; earthly, not heavenly; savoring of bondage, not of freedom.——When the time had fully come—the time fixed in the purpose of God; or, which amounts to the same, the time when God's preparatory work was finished and the world was ripe for the Messiah's coming, then God sent forth his Son to be *born** (better than "*made*") of woman by miracu-

* "Born" should be the word, rather than "*made*," this being the precise sense of the Greek word in such a connection. See John 8: 58 and Rom. 1: 3.

lous incarnation, and to be developed under the law in the sense of fulfilling all its righteousness so that he might redeem men under law and give them the adoption of sons. The perfect obedience of Christ was a condition precedent to his redemption of his people. He must needs fulfill all law that he might be accepted as the Redeemer of sinful men.

In v. 5 the two objects to be accomplished by his human birth and by his perfect righteousness are put in the same Greek word of relation (ἵνα) *to the end that* (1) he might redeem those under law, and (2) that we might receive adoption as sons.

6. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

7. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Now because ye are sons and to show that ye are such, God has sent forth his Spirit as he did also his Son (v. 4) [in both cases Paul uses the same word for sending forth]. This Spirit he sends into your heart, inspiring the spontaneous cry, "Father," "Father." He begets the son-feeling, and prompts to its free expression in this cry "Father."——Remarkably Paul gives the word "Father," first in the Aramean ("abba") (originally the Hebrew), and then in the Greek—which may indicate that people of every tongue are moved by the same witnessing Spirit to cry unto God, my Father—each in his own language.——No testimony to our real, legitimate sonship could be more decisive than this heaven-sent inspiration which causes such utterances of the child-feeling to well up out of the heart's sweet confidence in God.

No longer, therefore, a servant, but truly a son, thou art really an heir of God through Christ, brought at majority into the actual possession of all the prerogatives of sonship and heirship. ——Closely translated, the approved text of v. 7 would read, "So that thou art no longer servant but son; and if son, then also heir to God." The phrase is beautifully terse and expressive.

The usage contemplated here as to inheritance is Roman rather than Hebrew. The Galatians were then a Roman province.

8. Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

9. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

10. Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

11. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain.

Paul puts in sharp contrast their state *then* and *now;—then*, when in their Pagan superstition, not knowing the true God,

they were in the bondage of slavery to things by nature no gods at all;—and *now*, when, knowing God—or more precisely, being known by him, he having revealed himself to them in the light of his gospel and in the greatness of his love—how could they turn back to the powerless and poor elements of Judaism to which they seem to wish themselves again enslaved?——Paul makes but small account of the point whether they had been previously Jew or Gentile. In fact, some of them had been of one class and some of the other. Some had been Gentile idolaters; others, Jews. All alike had been seduced by Judaizing emissaries to turn to circumcision and legal doings for salvation. If Jews, how could they turn back to enslave themselves anew* to profitless Judaism—scarcely better at that time than idolatrous paganism?

Some critics (*e. g.*, Tischendorf, Meyer, Alford, etc.) prefer to read v. 10 interrogatively—"Do ye observe?" etc. So read, it doubtless assumes an affirmative answer. Others, with our authorized version, read it affirmatively; but either way, it amounts to the same thing. The affirmative reading seems to be at least unexceptionable, the clause being probably introduced here as presenting the facts in their case which caused him so grave apprehensions. The text has nothing that indicates a question.—— The sense is—I learn that ye are studiously observing the Mosaic ritual in respect to sacred days, months, times, and years.—— These were festivals or fasts; days of the new moon; the sabbatic year; the year of jubilee. The list may or may not include the Jewish sabbath. The Mosaic ritual would readily fill out this bill without including it.——So much ritual observance excited Paul's gravest apprehensions lest all his Christian labor in their behalf should be lost.

12. Brethren, I beseech you, be as I *am;* for I *am* as ye *are:* ye have not injured me at all.

13. Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first.

14. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, *even* as Christ Jesus.

As to Judaism I pray you to become as I am—dead to it as a scheme of justification before God; for despite of all my national, educational sympathies with that system, I have utterly abandoned it, and have become as ye are, putting myself upon your ground as Gentiles. What I tried so long and so thoroughly, only to find it worthless for the great purposes of salvation, and therefore have forsaken it altogether to come upon your ground, —*that* I beg you to abandon and come where I am now.

In nothing have ye wronged me personally. All our former relations to each other were entirely pleasant and most gratify-

* ανωθεν.

ing to me, begetting deep love in my heart for you.——Moreover ("de") ye know that it was *because of* infirmity of the flesh that I preached to you at the first (or the former time), being detained among you by illness, or by some particular though not specified "infirmity."

The sense of the Greek preposition (δια, with the accusative) must be—not that he preached in a state of much infirmity—as our authorized version might mean—but that his infirmity became the occasion of his detention among them, which resulted in his preaching there. Perhaps he had not intended to stop with them at all; or remained longer and preached more than he had intended, in consequence of this "infirmity."——The Greek word for "at the first" seems to be equivalent to—the first time, and to imply that he had preached there twice and this was the first of the two seasons, since otherwise there would be no occasion for this discrimination.

He alludes to this infirmity of the flesh for the purpose of saying that they did not despise or reject him on account of it, but received him notwithstanding it as if he had been an angel or even the Lord Jesus himself. What this special infirmity was, Paul has nowhere told us. The utmost labors of critical speculation have left the question where they found it. It is safe enough to say that it was very annoying to the great apostle (see 2 Cor. 12: 7–9), and moreover, was of a sort that might, in souls of a hard texture, excite, not sympathy but disgust. Therefore Paul puts it to their great credit that they were not repelled by it, but, despite of it, gave him an honorable and most hearty reception.

As to the word next before "temptation," there is a conflict of textual authorities between "my" and "your." Tischendorf gives it "your." With "my," the sense would be that this infirmity became a temptation, in the sense of a great trial, to himself; with "your," the intimation is that while the infirmity was his own, the temptation to feel disgust and aversion came upon them. The verbs he uses —"Ye did not *despise*" (set at naught), and "did not spit on" (Greek) favor the reading "your"—making the temptation theirs, not his.

15. Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if *it had been* possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

16. Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

With self-gratulation ye spake of your experience then as a "blessedness;"—where is that blessedness now? Ye then thought yourselves most happy in my labors; how is it now?—Alas! how changed!——For I bear you witness that then, ye would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me.——The inference made by some that Paul's infirmity was of his eyes, is quite gratuitous. This expression is proverbial and gives

no reliable clue to the nature of his infirmity. Have I become your enemy (in your view) because I have spoken to you the truth? That which should have made me doubly dear, as the highest testimony I could give of true friendship—has this turned you against me as if it proved me to be your enemy?

17. They zealously affect you, *but* not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.

18. But *it is* good to be zealously affected always in *a* good *thing*, and not only when I am present with you.

The authorized version here is obscure because the word "affect" in the transitive sense as here is obsolete. The sense of Paul's words seems to be—They profess and manifest a fiery zeal for your welfare, but not honorably or benevolently; for their motive is to bring you to honor them as their spiritual leaders. They play the religious demagogue, to get your patronage. Genuine proselyters are they, of low, sordid spirit.——I say nothing against true zeal. It is good to have it always—everywhere, in a good cause and for a worthy end;—always (I say) and not merely while I am present with you. The great warmth of your manifested affection toward me then was admirable. Would that ye might have such zeal forever!

19. My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

20. I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.

Remembering their former manifested love, his heart kindles again.——"*For* whom" (better than "of") I am again in birth pangs of prayer for your salvation.——Noticeably, the ultimate end of his prayer is not that they may make profession of Christ, or obtain hope of salvation through him;—but fundamentally—that Christ may be formed in their heart and life; his Spirit be breathed into them, and his whole character reproduced in theirs. He sought nothing less than their moral transformation into the image and spirit of Jesus Christ.

I have wished to be present with you now and change my voice to such loving tones as would truly express my heart.——That the "change" referred to is toward greater tenderness rather than toward greater severity can not reasonably be questioned. The drift of the context is in the line of tenderest sympathy. It doubtless grieved him that he had been compelled to rebuke them sharply. If he could be present with them, his loving tones and tears might obviate the necessity of these stern words. His heart yearns for this result.

21. Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

22. For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman.

23. But he *who was* of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman *was* by promise.

24. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

25. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

26. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

27. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

This is professedly an "allegory." Certain historic facts in the family life of Abraham are taken up by Paul to illustrate the two contrasted cases—viz., of those on the one hand who were in bondage to the rites of the Mosaic system; and on the other of those who were free from that bondage and in the liberty which Christ gives his believing children.

Ye who make so great account of the old Hebrew law, why do ye not read that law intelligently? Look at this: Abraham had two sons, Ishmael and Isaac; the former by a bondwoman; the latter, by a free; the former being the result of the common passion for offspring—the suggestion of Sarah being prompted by her fear that Abraham would else never have a son to his name; but the latter was definitely a child of promise, and of faith in that promise. These two very unlike births may illustrate to us the two covenants; the former, developed on Mt. Sinai, significant of bondage, *i. e.*, to rites and ceremonies, and representing the present Jerusalem and her children; while the latter represents the upper Jerusalem, nobly free, the true mother of all believers, and the same whom Isaiah accosted in such lofty prophetic words of triumph. This reference is to Isa. 54: 1, which foreshadows the joy of the gospel Zion when God shall multiply her spiritual sons and daughters from Gentile nations.

Some special criticisms on particular points should be suggested.

In v. 22 the force of the Greek article should have been preserved in the translation; the one—not by *a* bondmaid, but by "*the*" bondmaid; the other by *the*—the well-known free woman. In v. 23, the word "*but*" (Gr. alla) is emphatic:—*But*, though both these were sons of the same father, yet how unlike! What a contrast between them!——In v. 25, the best critics agree that Mt. Sinai in Arabic usage bore the name Hagar—a fact which makes Paul's allegory doubly pertinent. The Jerusalem which is above * in v. 26 corresponds remarkably with the "New

* Gr. *avω*.

Jerusalem" of the Revelator John (21 : 2), "the holy city, coming down from God out of heaven;" but whether John's conception came from Paul, or Paul's from John, or neither, it were vain to conjecture. In v. 27, the children of her who had been desolate are declared to be not only more in number relatively, but to be *many*, absolutely.

28. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

29. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him *that was born* after the Spirit, even so *it is* now.

30. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman.

31. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

We under the gospel system are like Isaac, the sons of the free-woman and children of promise. As there was persecution then —Ishmael's race and Esau's, hostile to the heirs of promise—so is it now and so it will be yet for a season. They of the flesh will hate, and will harm if they can, the sons of the promise. But, as the Scripture said—"Cast out the bondwoman" and give herself and hers no joint heirship with the free; so will it be now and ever; God will show himself on the side of his free sons and daughters. Persecution shall not harm them in the end.

CHAPTER V.

Commencing here the practical part of his letter, Paul exhorts that they stand fast in their Christian liberty from Jewish bondage (v. 1); declares that relying on circumcision, they renounce Christ and can have nothing from him (v. 2); being bound to obey the Mosaic law perfectly if they look to it for justification (v. 3); because they have utterly fallen from the salvation which comes through grace (v. 4); that the Spirit inspires the hope of righteousness through faith (v. 5); that it is only faith working by love and not circumcision, which avails to give us Christ (v. 6); they had been running well; who had wrought this change? (v. 7–9); but his confidence as to them should not fail (v. 10); his own persecutions have been due to his preaching against circumcision (v. 11, 12); let them not abuse the liberty to which the gospel had called them, but serve in love (v. 13) —which is indeed the fulfilling of the law (v. 14); over against which mal-

ice works all mischief (v. 15); the flesh and the Spirit naturally antagonistic (v. 16, 17); but being led by the Spirit, they live so that no law condemns them (v. 18); the works of the flesh indicated (v. 19–21); also the fruits of the Spirit (v. 22, 23); how Christ's people should and do live (v. 24–26).

1. Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

In this verse textual authorities vary as to both the words and the punctuation. Tischendorf has it—In (or with) liberty, Christ has made us free. Therefore stand fast, and do not allow yourselves to be held again under the yoke of bondage. Other authorities give it as in our authorized version, "Stand fast then," etc. In each reading the sense is essentially the same. Christ had exempted them from bondage to Jewish rites; let them vigorously assert and maintain this liberty.

2. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

"Behold"—mark this; I Paul, on my authority from God as an apostle, declare to you that if ye become circumcised, Christ shall avail you nothing. Ye lose thenceforth all benefit from Christ. Ye accept another scheme of salvation, and so doing, ye disown Christ, and he will disown you. Ye can in nowise blend together these two opposite schemes of salvation so as to avail yourselves of both.

3. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

The translation should not begin "for," but rather thus: Now again, I testify, etc. Paul speaks as a witness under oath, giving his solemn testimony. To every man, not who *has been* circumcised, but who now, and from this time onward, resorts to circumcision; for in time past his light on this point may have been but meager; but under the light I have now given you, I tell you if any man resorts to circumcision as necessary for his salvation, he binds himself to obey the whole law. If he elects salvation by means of law instead of salvation by faith in Christ, he must keep that law perfectly, for salvation through works of law can be had only on this principle: "Cursed is he that continueth not in all things written in the law to do them."

4. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

The form of Paul's statement here is this: Ye have apostatized from Christ all ye who seek justification in and by the law: ye have withdrawn yourselves from Christ and made his aid of no avail to you. Ye have fallen out of the system of grace; have

fallen below its reach, where it can bless you no more.——This phrase—"fallen from grace"—is often heard in the sense of relapsing from a state of gracious acceptance with God by backsliding in heart, or by immoralities of life. It should be noted that Paul means precisely the case of those who abandon Christ as their ground of justification, and put in his stead the system of law and ritual observances. This change of base is, of course, fundamental. It discards grace, mercy; and falls back upon legal doings for salvation.

5. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

The logical connection with what precedes ("for") I take to be this: Your system is totally unlike ours; ye look to your works for justification; but we, all real Christians, being led by the Spirit, look for our justification through faith in Jesus.

The somewhat difficult phrase—"wait for the hope of righteousness by faith"—admits of two constructions according as we construe "hope of righteousness" to mean (*a*) the hoped-for righteousness; or (*b*) the hope itself of righteousness. Strictly speaking, hope is a state of mind—one which looks with more or less expectation for future good. But it may be used here simply to qualify "righteousness," *i. e.*, to indicate that this righteousness (justification) is an object of hope. It goes far to support this construction in the present case, that the verb "wait for" itself includes the sense of hope, expectation; and Paul would not say, We hope for the hope. Better therefore is the other construction—We wait earnestly for that hoped-for righteousness which comes to us through faith in Christ.

6. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

"For" (this is good logic) we know that in Christ, the being circumcised, or the *not* being, is of no account whatever; nothing can avail but *faith*; and note well, it must be that faith which begets love, and becomes spiritually mighty through love. It is not a dead inoperative faith of which Paul speaks and in which he finds salvation. On the contrary, it is such faith as makes the truth real to the soul, and therefore wakens it to loving obedience with the energy of truth made mighty through the Spirit. Faith in its Christian sense supposes the soul to accept the gospel as truly revealing God, and then to put its voluntary powers into harmony with this truth in the spirit of obedience and of love. So doing, faith works mightily to beget that love. No test for the genuineness of faith can compare with this—its working energetically unto love, and, through love, unto all obedience.

7. Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

8. This persuasion *cometh* not of him that calleth you.

9. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

10. I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.

Ye were running well, when I left you, and onward for a season. Who was it that hindered your progress in this Christian race, by breaking up your road (so the original implies), so that (to drop the figure) ye no longer obeyed the truth?

This persuasion which drew you away from obedience to gospel truth is another and totally different scheme for salvation. It never came from the Father who first called you by his grace. Paul is wont to ascribe the call which draws human souls to Christ, not to the gospel preacher, nor specially to Christ; but to God the Father.

In v. 9 we have a familiar proverb, to denote a spreading, pervading influence, working through society. Whether the word "little" looks directly to the amount of positive influence at the start, or to the number of individuals who set it in motion, is not altogether clear, nor is it specially important.——Paul expresses his confidence in them through the grace of the Lord that he will restore the wayward, and visit due retribution upon those Judaizing emissaries who had so disturbed their gospel faith and imperiled their salvation.——Paul's words might be held to indicate that there was but one such emissary; yet he may have meant only that every such one, few or many, must bear his own responsibility before God.

11. And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offense of the cross ceased.

12. I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

Returning to Christ ye may incur persecution from those bigoted Jews. Such is my experience. They persecute me because I oppose circumcision. The cross of Christ is an offense to them.——Oh, that those who thus "trouble" you (unsettle, Gr.), would sever themselves from all connection with you, withdraw from your communion and leave you to an undisturbed gospel life. So, in my view, should v. 12 be construed. Some have put a very different sense upon Paul's word, viz., that he wished they would not only circumcise but mutilate themselves. Nothing short of the most peremptory demand in the word he used can justify such a sense—so abhorrent to the character of Paul and to the spirit of the gospel. Such demand is not here.

13. For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

14. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

15. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

A blessed call is this indeed to the enjoyment of Christian liberty, exempting you from burdensome, profitless bondage to defunct Judaism, and introducing you (if you will) into the freedom of the sons of God, through Christ. Only beware lest ye pervert this liberty into an occasion and temptation to the flesh. Rather let it be enjoyed under the demands and the regulating influences of real love. The only noble, blessed life is the serving of each other in true love. Then ye are self-blessed and a blessing to others to the utmost extent of your power. For the supreme moral law given of God to man is summarily comprised in this one precept: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," which implies that ye estimate his happiness as ye do your own, and set your heart to promote it, even as ye do your own. Even through Moses, God gave his law this concise and beautiful form (Lev. 19: 18). Jesus put the substance of the second table of the decalogue in the same terms (Matt. 22: 39), and Paul to the Romans (13: 9) still repeats the same incomparable words. This standard of measurement is always near and well enough known—*the love we bear ourselves.* Such love, therefore, is what the law requires of us toward our neighbor; which implies that we rejoice in his good as we are wont to in our own; take his interests into account as we do our own; are careful never to infringe upon them, more than upon our own, and love to labor for his welfare as we love to work for our own.——It is very easy to believe, indeed, it is impossible to doubt that this is the real spirit of the heavenly world; the sort of love and the measure of the love that reigns eternally there, and makes that world of love a world of pure and perfect blessedness.——But if a spirit totally opposite to this be indulged; if, giving full scope to selfishness, ye are biting and devouring your neighbors, take heed lest ye be consumed by each other. Mutual biting and devouring must end in this—the utter ruin of society; the utter wreck of human happiness! It comes in the end to social cannibalism—men preying upon each other, till nothing more remains to devour.

16. *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

17. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye can not do the things that ye would.

18. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

This I would say to you most emphatically: Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall in nowise fulfill the lusts of the flesh. This will save you from the power of your fleshly lusts. For the Spirit of God and the flesh of man are antagonistic forces, each working against the other;—the Spirit of God inspiring love; the flesh of

man inspiring hate, selfishness—all low and base passions. These lie against each other in hostile attitude (so the Greek word signifies)—to the result that ye do not what ye would—so that the reason why your good purposes and endeavors so often fail is to be found in this counter-working of human flesh against God's Spirit.——If ye were indeed thoroughly led by the Spirit, ye would not be condemned under the law. This I take to be the apostle's meaning. I judge he can not mean to deny that Christians, however holy, are still subject to the demands of the divine law. The clause must be interpreted in harmony with Paul's often expressed views as to the law of God, which everywhere assert its authority over human souls; *e. g.*, in v. 14 above. Moreover, this clause should be placed by the side of the declaration in this very context (v. 23), "Against such there is no law"—no law condemns such "fruits of the Spirit."

What it is to "walk in the Spirit," it becomes supremely vital to understand and to put continually in practice. It assumes that we labor to learn the mind of the Spirit; that we study his will in his word; that we hold the heart joyfully open to his gentlest monitions; that we never resist his manifest teachings; that we reverently honor his mission and count it our supreme blessedness to be perpetually taught and led of him.

19. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these:* Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20. Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

21. Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

This enumeration should not be taken as exhaustive, including all possible "works of the flesh," but rather as giving specimens for illustration, selecting the most prevalent then and there.—These vices and such as these are "works of the flesh"—works to which man's fleshly impulses impel him. They are the result of passions and appetites, working without restraint and control.

The oldest textual authorities omit "adultery;" yet none can question that this is one of the perpetual works of the flesh. "Fornication" was fearfully prevalent in those regions of Asia, of which prevalence we have incidental proof in the fact that it is specially condemned in the decision of the great Jerusalem Council (Acts 15: 20) in a document which names no other one of the vices grouped together here as "works of the flesh."

I forewarn you now, as I have heretofore, that those who do such things shall never inherit the pure kingdom of God. The Revelator John, in his description of the heavenly city, makes this fact intensely emphatic (Rev. 21: 8, 27 and 22: 15). So by the very nature of the case it must forever be.

22. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

23. Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

While the effects attributed to the flesh are "works," those begotten of the Spirit are "fruits." Works presuppose no other agency; the base man's fleshly appetites are directly the doers; himself alone is responsible. But to express the qualities born in human souls of the Spirit, the word "fruits" is better, being more suggestive of influences from without himself;—culture and inspiration—of which the blessed Spirit of God is the sole author. All moral good in lost souls comes from Him; let all glory be his alone, forever!

Of these fruits "love" stands legitimately first—love, the center and inspiring force of all the rest, evermore leading the whole train of Christian graces.—"Joy" comes next fitly as the legitimate outcome of love. Never can there be love without joy as its effect in the soul. All true love is joyous.—"Peace" should perhaps be taken here, not specially in its relation to God—the peace of mind Godward which does indeed "pass all understanding;" but rather in contrast with the "works of the flesh" named above—peace in society; peace in the social harmony of loving souls in all their most common relations—totally unlike the wrath, strife, collisions, quarrels, which fill so large a place in the category of "works of the flesh."—Of the rather unusual word translated "meekness," Ellicott says: "Something more than non-irascibility toward men, viz., a deep submission toward God, and having its seat in the inner spirit."——"Temperance" (as usual in the epistles) in the broad sense of controlling all the fleshly appetites and passions; and by no means restricted to that special appetite which craves alcoholic stimulants. Not temperance therefore in our technical sense exclusively, but in the much broader sense of self-mastery in general—the subjection of every fleshly appetite to the rule of reason, conscience, and God.——Such fruits and those in whom they appear, no law condemns. They are in harmony with all good law;—never in opposition.

24. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

25. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

26. Let us not be desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another.

"Have crucified"—not merely intend, resolve, endeavor, to do this; but *have done* it. They who are "of Christ Jesus"—who belong to him as his adopted sons and daughters, and who consequently submit themselves to Him to be led by his indwelling Spirit—all these have crucified the flesh, *i. e.*, in the special sense of subjugating, slaying unto death, its vile affections and lusts. They have renounced the dominion of those propensities and have disowned allegiance to those masters, and have put them-

selves under the dominion of Christ through his Spirit. To this they are mightily drawn by their love for the Crucified One.

"If we live in the Spirit," he being the author and source of our spiritual life, peace, and joy, then let us walk also in that Spirit, conforming all our activities—internal and external—to his will. The verb for walk is somewhat stronger than the other word more often used for walking about, inasmuch as it carries the accessory sense of walking by rule, conforming one's self to a definite standard; in the present case, the revealed will or law of the Spirit. Such is the sense of the same verb in Gal. 6: 16—"As many as *walk* according to this rule," etc.

"Be not vainglorious," the besetting sin of Pharisaism, and therefore, no doubt, manifested forcibly by those Judaizing emissaries. The outcome of such ambition for human glory would be mutual provocation in the case of the superior class; envy in the bosoms of the inferior. Ambition for pre-eminence as it sometimes manifests itself in religious circles is an insidious and terrible poison, often showing itself in detraction, evil-speaking, or in envy and jealousy—all most unlike the "fruits of the Spirit."

CHAPTER VI.

Various admonitions and counsels—as to treatment of the erring (v. 1); bearing each other's burdens (v. 2); modest self-estimation (v. 3); based on true self-knowledge (v. 4); since every man must bear his own moral responsibility (v. 5); the taught should share earthly good with their teachers (v. 6); and all remember that the reaping will be as the sowing (v. 7, 8); for the fruitage of well-doing is sure (v. 9); and not least, as to those of the faith (v. 10); the motives and spirit of their Judaizing teachers noticed (v. 22, 13); in contrast with the nobler spirit of the apostle (v. 14); which illustrates wherein lies the gospel's power (v. 15). Benedictions (vs. 16–18) close this epistle.

1. Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

"Overtaken" suggests pursuit by an enemy—a victim hunted down and caught at last in a moment of weakness, weariness, or unwatchfulness. There may be force in the apology—"The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."——"Ye who are spiritual"—but who "the spiritual" are, is sometimes strangely misapprehended. Paul has given the unmistakable clew to his meaning in his description (5: 22, 23) of "the fruits of the Spirit." "The spiritual" are the men of love and peace—the men whose souls have real sympathy with their tempted, faltering brethren, and

who have, moreover, such a sense of their own frailty that they can feel the force of the motive—"Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Let such men set themselves to restore their erring brethren, and do it in the spirit of meekness—not making much display of condescension, but rather in all modesty and genuine humility.

2. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

3. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

4. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

5. For every man shall bear his own burden.

The thoughtful reader of the authorized version will notice an apparent discrepancy between "bearing one another's burdens," and "every man's bearing his own";—the former an injunction; the latter, a fact; for how should it be our duty to bear other men's burdens if really every man must bear his own?—Paul's Greek has a common word for *bearing*, but not for "burden"—a fact which suggests that the "burden" in the two cases is by no means the same.——The context suggests a similar explanation. The "burdens" in v. 2 ("bear ye one another's burdens") are those of moral weakness, and doubtless also of physical infirmity, such as call legitimately for Christian sympathy. Such sympathy the law of Christ enjoins: "A new commandment I give unto you—that ye love one another" (John 13: 34). Also, "That we should love one another as he gave us commandment" (1 John 3: 23). See the same precept expanded by Paul (Rom. 13: 8, 10 and 15: 1). —Such bearing of one another's burdens is therefore most legitimate, and pre-eminently Christian, by the law of Christ.

It should be noticed that v. 3 begins logically with "for"—the logical connection being, supposably, this: This law of Christian sympathy fails to take hold of proud, self-conceited souls. Poor men! They know not what spirit they are of—*for* if a man, being really nothing, thinks himself to be something, he simply deceives himself. He makes a supreme mistake. The really noble qualities of character are love overflowing always in Christian sympathy; but of these qualities, his self-conceited soul knows nothing. All that is really great and noble in character, he utterly lacks.——Hence follows a new exhortation. Let every man prove his own work—his own doings, and do this on the basis of what they are in themselves—in broad distinction from judging of himself by comparison with others, setting his own better doings over against their worse. Such "comparing themselves among themselves" Paul holds to be not wise (2 Cor. 10: 12). So here; If a man will prove himself by what himself actually is, he may have ground for rejoicing found in himself alone, and not drawn from comparison with "the other" as Paul's words have it.——It

is from this point of thought that the apostle proceeds to say—logically—"*For* every man shall bear his own load"*—his own personal responsibility; that is, to judge himself by his own doings, and not by comparison with somebody else. If a man will deceive himself by indulging this silly self-conceit and pride, he must bear his own responsibility, for no mortal can help him. No sympathy of fellow-mortals can take off any part of his load. Before God he must stand or fall on his own personal character. God will not judge him by comparing him with that other man—never! Let him see to it that he estimates his own moral character by the same standard which God has given us notice He shall use at the final bar!

6. Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

"Communicate"—not in the sense of giving information but of sharing his own "good things." There being a class of men devoting themselves to teaching the sacred word, let the taught impart of their good things to these teachers. The one class having truth to impart and the other bread, let these latter give of what they have as freely and benevolently as the former. God asks no purer benevolence, no sterner self-sacrifice, of him who dispenses truth than of him who ought to communicate of his bread. This doctrine Paul inculcates often, albeit, sometimes, wishing for special reasons to be quite independent of men given to slander and carping, he chose to make tents for his living, or to rob other churches, taking wages of them, in order to do unpaid service to croaking people.——But Paul evermore maintained the doctrine put here. (See 1 Cor. 9: 7–14 and Rom. 15: 27.)

7. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

I see no reason to question that the thoughts presented here are suggested by the case put in v. 6.—this being a broader generalization of that principle. You may deceive men, but God you can not deceive. God will not suffer himself to be mocked. Paul's word suggests the turning up of the nose in contempt! Woe be to the man who indulges himself in such a spirit toward the Infinite God!——The seed each man sows will bear its own fruit for his reaping. Let him not expect to reap after another man's sowing, but rather be very sure that God will hold him to his own harvest—from the sowing by his own hand. Sowing to the flesh—under its impulses and for its ends—he will reap only corruption. Sowing in like manner under the impulses of the Spirit, in obedience to its behests, his reaping will be life everlasting. What can be more reasonable? What more certain?

*φορτιον.

9. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

In doing good, never lose heart; be always hopeful and never discouraged; for in due season—in God's own good time—the reaping hour will come, and will be none the less joyous for the possibly long delay. Especially is there every reason for hopefulness in efforts for doing good to those of the household of faith. Remember all these are of one common family, one household, having therefore a rightful claim upon the sympathy and help of the whole brotherhood.

11. Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

On this verse critical opinions vary between these two constructions; (*a.*) How long an epistle; (*b.*) With how large characters I have written. The former is supported by its more pertinent sense; the latter by the current usage of his words. The major portion of critics, accurate in lexicography, give their voice for the latter.

That Paul usually wrote epistles by the hand of an amanuensis—the salutation only with his own—is unquestioned. Tertius wrote Romans, (Rom. 16: 22). In three cases Paul notes the fact that the salutation was by his own hand (1 Cor. 16: 21 and Col. 4: 18 and 2 Thess. 3: 17). Hence there seems no good reason apparent for his calling attention to the large character of his own hand-writing. But if, contrary to his usual practice, he wrote the entire epistle with his own hand, he might well appeal to this fact as proof of profound interest and perhaps, of personal self-sacrifice. But on the other hand, the demands of usage as to the sense of the words are not to be lightly set aside, and in the present case are unquestionably very strong. The point, however, has no grave importance.

12. As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

13. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

A strong national Jewish feeling amounting to a public sentiment intensely earnest, in favor of Judaism, must be assumed as prevalent in Judea at least, and, though with somewhat less strength, among the dispersed of their nation. This is requisite to account for the "fair show in the flesh," and for the "glorying in your flesh" which appear as motives here. These emis-

saries of Judaism (Paul would say) would fain make capital for themselves at home; would avoid being persecuted (as I am) for the cross of Christ; and though they do not themselves observe the law, would have the credit of making converts to a system which themselves personally disregard.

14. But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

15. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

Paul disdains such truckling time-serving hypocrisy. Such glorying in forcing circumcision upon Gentile converts for the sake of honor at Jerusalem is beneath his contempt. Nobly does he declare—God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord! Be it so that this cross is the badge of disgrace throughout the Roman world, it shall be in my esteem the badge of glory. By that cross the world is slain to me, and I am dead to the world.——For in Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision count any thing; nothing has value but the new creation—the new life unto which souls are born through the Spirit.

16. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

17. From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

18. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

To all who walk by this rule—according to these principles—let there be peace and mercy, yea even upon the whole true Israel—the Israel that really is *of God*. Here "the Israel of God" are put in designed and strong contrast with the Israel that were then after the flesh—whom Paul had but too much occasion to know. This contrast was every way pertinent to the purpose of this epistle.——Evermore hereafter, let no man trouble me (as these opponents and enemies of the gospel I preach have done) for I bear in my body the marks of my Lord—said probably with some allusion to the body-marks imprinted upon slaves to identify them to their masters. Such marks Paul had more than once received from the scourge of persecution. Therefore, he says, let my apostleship from Christ be never more called in question! My scourge-scars are my proofs! In them I glory!

And so, in the loftiest tones of Christian heroism and in the undying fervors of Christian love he breathes forth his farewell benedictions and closes this grand epistle.

THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

INTRODUCTION.

An introduction to this epistle, to be helpful to its readers, should treat—

I. *Of Ephesus;*

II. Of the *labors of Paul in that city;*

III. Of the somewhat disputed point—Was this epistle really written to the church at Ephesus?

IV. Of the *place where* and of the *time when* it was written;

V. Of its *adaptations and purposes.*

I. Ephesus, now and for many centuries past in ruins, was in the age of Paul one of the greatest cities of Asia Minor, and the chief in the province of Ionia. It lay on the western coast of Asia, on the south bank of the Cayster, near its mouth, and thirty miles south of Smyrna. Commercially, it had easy communication by water with Corinth on the west and with the various marts of maritime commerce on the eastern shore of the Great Sea; and by land, with the valley of the Euphrates and the mighty East. Its population in the apostolic age may be roughly estimated from the ruins of that immense "theater" which appears in Luke's history (Acts 19: 31), capacious enough to seat thirty thousand men. Its magnificence was heightened by its being the great center for the worship of Diana, of whom they were proud to say—"Whom all Asia and the world worshipeth" (Acts 19: 27). "Her temple, 425 feet in length by 220 in width, was adorned with a colonnade of 127 columns of Parian marble 60 feet in height, each column the gift of a prince—a fact which goes to show the wide extent of this particular form of idolatry. It was of old accounted one of the seven wonders of the world. The social and immoral forces of her Diana worship upon Ephesus were heightened by city and national pride in such magnificence; by the consideration of being the center of a system so vast

and far-reaching; by the wealth it brought to coppersmiths and artisans—the makers and venders of silver shrines for Diana; by the "books" which taught their magic arts; and not least, by the license it gave to the vices it fostered, and by the powerful appeal it was evermore making to the superstitions and to the baser lusts of mankind. Under all these influences, idolatry had intrenched itself in this great city, prepared to bid defiance to any assailant. If Paul had been capable of fear and given to faltering before obstacle or foe, he would have passed Ephesus by. But never a thought had he of leaving out of his great missionary plan a city where so many souls of men were congregated, and from whence so much Christian power might go forth abroad over other cities, provinces, and realms.

II. Of Paul's labors in this city, Luke has given a very brief sketch (Acts 18–20 chap.) Paul had been at Corinth, introducing the gospel there (Acts 18: 1–18). Thence with Priscilla and Aquila he came to Ephesus, and there began his gospel work as usual in a synagogue of Jews. A favorable reception could not detain him long just then, for his heart was set upon being in Jerusalem at the ensuing Pentecost (of A. D. 54). However, he left his friends above named to carry forward the work there during his absence; hastened to Jerusalem; but soon returned and sat down to earnest gospel work in that great and wicked city. Meantime, Priscilla and Aquila had been strengthened by the accession of Apollos, to whose history Luke devotes a brief paragraph. He next notes the fact that Paul found at Ephesus a band of twelve men who had been disciples of John the Baptist, and who, to that hour, had advanced no further. Their minds were in that very state of preparation which John's mission contemplated. Hence they seem to have been prominent among the first converts to the infant church at Ephesus. For three months Paul prosecuted his work in the synagogue gathering some disciples, but ultimately incurring fierce prejudice and opposition from "divers" who were hardened and would not believe. Therefore, withdrawing from them, he made a gospel stand for two years' daily preaching and discussion "in the school of one Tyrannus." The result of this protracted effort was such that "all they who dwelt in Asia" (so called) "heard the word of the Lord Jesus" (19: 10).—If to this record of Paul's public labors by Luke, we add his own testimony as given to the elders of that church whom he met by ap-

pointment at Miletus (twenty-seven miles south of Ephesus) (Acts 20: 17–38), that "by the space of three years he ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears," we may have some conception of what earnest gospel labor means as shown in the burning zeal, the intense love for souls, and the unsparing toil of the great apostle to the Gentiles.

With miracles also Paul confronted and put to silence and to shame the magicians and exorcists of the city, and made great inroads upon their sway over a superstitious people. Through penitence or fear, multitudes renounced their pretensions to magic and made a bonfire of the books which taught those arts, to the estimated value of "fifty thousand pieces of silver." ["These pieces are commonly supposed to be the Attic drachma, varying in value from fifteen to seventeen cents, making a total of at least seven or eight thousand dollars."—*Alex.*] The magnitude of this sum may measure to us the power of gospel truth which must have pervaded large masses of the people.

Ultimately this rapid growth and wide prevalence of the gospel's power alarmed the whole fraternity of silversmiths and craftsmen whose bread and fame were in peril; a fierce, ungovernable mob resulted; and Paul was compelled to evade the storm, following the wise counsel of the Lord: "If they persecute you in one city, flee ye to another."—The church however was planted there, and the powers of hell could not (at once) prevail against it. But Paul's personal labors there came abruptly to a close.

No reader should suppose that he knows Paul, his Christian spirit, and his intense and mighty labors in the gospel, till he has read carefully the wonderfully modest yet thrilling record of his words to the elders of this church whom he met at Miletus.—"Ye know (said he) how I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord (not myself or any man), with humility of mind and with many tears and temptations"—which noticeably he traces not to the tremendous influences of Diana-worship there, but to "the lying-in-wait of the Jews"—those everywhere malignant, artful, persistent opponents of his gospel work; "how I kept back nothing that was profitable, but showed and taught you publicly and from house to house."—This was the way of his work—sometimes in the public assembly, and then at their homes, finding men where he could and never wearied of his work.—What he taught them, he put in brief words: "Testifying

both to Jews and Greeks repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ." But the whole record lies before every Bible reader and need not be repeated here.

Such then were Paul's labors in that great city, protracted through three years (A. D. 54–57).

III. We meet the question discussed somewhat among modern critics; viz., Whether this epistle was really addressed to this church at Ephesus.

The question is not whether Paul wrote it; this point is not disputed; but *to whom* was it addressed?—On a question of this nature, my plan admits of only the briefest discussion.

Naturally the sources of proof are twofold; (1.) External; (2.) Internal; the former, the authorities for the text; the latter, the things said or omitted in the epistle itself.

1. The external authorities are somewhat diverse and conflicting. According to Tischendorf the three oldest manuscripts (S. V. A.) put the general heading "To the Ephesians;" but are not unanimous as to the words "in Ephesus," in v. 1. Ellicott, one of the most thorough and candid of critics, states his opinion thus: "That the epistle was addressed to the church at Ephesus seems scarcely open to serious doubt. Both the critical arguments and the nearly unanimous consent of the early church are so decidedly in favor of it that we scarcely seem warranted in calling in question a statement so strongly supported." It should be noticed that the adverse authorities for the text are simply negative; never positive; *i. e.*, some of them fail to say "in Ephesus" (v. 1), but none of them put any other destination in its place. Not one assigns it to any church or place other than Ephesus.

2. So of the internal testimonies; there is an obvious omission of personal greetings, such as we find in most of Paul's epistles. But we may account for this omission satisfactorily upon these two grounds: (1.) That Paul sent it by the hand of Tychicus, who was very probably a citizen of Ephesus and entirely competent to convey all personal salutations by word of mouth; and (2.) That this epistle may have been intended by Paul, not for the Ephesian church only, but for other churches, contiguous to them as well, to whom Tychicus might convey it. A circular letter is certainly supposable. So designed, it would wisely omit whatever would be personal to Ephesus only. It is generally agreed that the Epistle to Colosse was sent by the same hand (Col. 4: 7, 8) at the same time. As Paul trusted his friend

Tychicus to tell the Colossians "all his state," so he may have committed to him the same service for his Ephesian brethren.—Moreover, no positive internal evidence has ever been adduced to show that this epistle was written for any other church than that at Ephesus. The objection on internal grounds is only that there is not enough of personal allusion to that church—a very weak objection, especially when we consider the probability of its having been intended for the use of other churches also. And yet further; this epistle is just as barren of greetings to Laodicea as to Ephesus. If that barrenness proves that he did not address it to Ephesus, it proves equally that he never addressed it to *any* church—not to say that he never wrote it at all, for it differs from his customary method. Thus criticism runs itself into absurdities. In my judgment, no reader need feel disturbed by any adverse criticism against the address of this epistle to the church at Ephesus.

IV. In the questions, *When* and *where* written, fortunately, there seems no ground for doubt. All agree to locate its writing as to *place*, at Rome, and as to *time*, during his two years' imprisonment there awaiting the issue of his appeal to Cæsar—*i. e.*, about A. D. 61 or 62. It thus falls in time into the third group of his epistles, classed with that to the Colossians, that to Philemon, and that to the Philippians.

V. Of its *adaptations and objects* there is nothing in the epistle to indicate that Paul had any very special object in this writing—nothing so special as that which occasioned his writing to the Galatians, or to the Corinthians. The epistle is rather the outflowing of a loving heart, of a pastor's solicitude for the spiritual welfare of his flock; or, to go yet deeper, the outflow of thoughts that welled up in his soul as in his lone confinement in his Roman prison, he recalled the scenes of his three years' labor there; the depth of idolatrous debasement in which he found them; the great mercy of God in their redemption; how that mercy must be traced back to the pure love of the Father; to his eternal purpose into which there entered no element or thought of human merit; how all was due to a divine purpose of grace which was in this sense sovereign—that it rested on nothing antecedently good in the recipients of his favor. Associated with this conception of God's foregoing grace and mercy, there were other conceptions of great depths of love, passing all measure by human thought, and of marvelous resources of *power to save*. However deeply these grand conceptions of

God and of his gospel may have been wrought into the very soul of Paul by his own conversion, it is obvious enough that they may have been suggested afresh and delightfully illustrated to his personal contemplation by his reminiscences of experience at Ephesus. For he remembered how in that great city he had been brought face to face with the fiercest powers of Pagan idolatry and superstition; how, humanly speaking, he had fought with wild beasts in the terrible arena of blood and death; how Jew and Greek had withstood his gospel work with sternest antagonism; and how he had found in many a toilsome hour that his wrestling was not merely with flesh and blood, but with the principalities and powers of hell itself. But, to his joy, God had proved himself there to be mightier to save than they all to destroy. Oh, how gloriously did those experiences open to his great and receptive mind the unsearchable riches of love and of power in Christ Jesus! Sublimer words on these great themes have rarely if ever fallen from human lips. Apparently he put them on paper and sent them to his beloved converts at Ephesus because they were so precious to his own soul, because they had proved so refreshing to his spirit, both during those three years of toil, and during these later years of enforced seclusion, yet of sweet reflection and remembrance, in which even to-day it is the Christian reader's joy to sympathize. Moreover Paul could not forget that his Ephesian converts were yet in the heat of battle and would doubtless need the sustaining support of such views of God's great love and of Christ's power to save.

Collateral themes come in to fill out this sublime epistle, none lacking adaptation; some, we can readily see peculiarly adapted to instruct, guide, and inspire his spiritual children there. Such were the wisdom and broad catholicity of the gospel scheme which brought Gentile as well as Jew within the pale of its equal blessings; the marvelous dispensation of the gifts of the Holy Ghost in which unity and diversity were blended most sweetly together, and every variety of natural gifts and endowments were utilized to their utmost extent under the diverse ministrations of the Spirit.

Such views of the gospel scheme and of the love and wisdom from which they spring culminate under Paul's hand to practical results. Let what they learn of Christ inspire them to cherish his spirit in their own souls; to put on his pure and perfect character; to walk in love to all and malice

to none; to rebuke the wickedness that filled their great city, by the irreproachable purity of their lives and the unruffled sweetness of their temper.

Such counsels fitly assume the form of specific adaptation to various classes in society; to wives and husbands; to children and parents; to servants and to their masters:—culminating finally in the thought so naturally suggested by his reminiscences of Ephesus—that pre-eminently there, Christian life must be a drawn fight—a life-long battle with the devil and all his hosts and all his wiles. Therefore, let them put on the very panoply of God;—girdle, breastplate, greaves, the gospel sandals, the shield of faith, helmet, sword, and, mightier than all, prayer. So should the battle be unto victory and triumph.

Thus this epistle exhibits manifold adaptations to Ephesus, and a group of purposes and objects worthy of its author.

THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

CHAPTER I.

The usual introduction, address, and salutations appear (v. 1, 2); he calls men to praise God for his unmeasured spiritual blessings through Christ Jesus (v. 3), traceable to God's eternal choice of them unto holiness (v. 4), to be adopted by Christ for his own through his great love and to his praise (v. 5, 6). Redemption and forgiveness suggest the riches of grace (v. 7), coupled with gifts of wisdom and intelligence (v. 8), developed in God's revelation of his great and eternal mercy (v. 9) and of his vast plan for the union of all under Christ the head (v. 10); through whom we have our inheritance according to his purpose that we might be to his praise (v. 11, 12). How their salvation came through the word and the ensealing of the Spirit—the pledge of their future inheritance (v. 13, 14); and how the tidings of their sustained faith and love inspired his gratitude and prayer (v. 15, 16), that God would give them wisdom and knowledge to apprehend the greatness of his power in their behalf (v. 17–19), such as he put forth in raising Christ from the dead and exalting him above all (v. 20, 21), putting all things under his feet, and making him Supreme Head of his church (v. 22, 23).

1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

2. Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul's commission as an apostle came specially from Jesus Christ who met him on his way to Damascus and there gave him this definite commission (Acts 26: 15–18). "By the will of God" might contemplate specially his good-will—his great mercy, or merely his efficient purpose—that all-controlling will which orders all things in its wisdom and brings them to pass through its energy. Neither would be foreign from the scope of the context. To the former Paul's heart was keenly alive as we may often notice whenever he alludes to his apostolic call as from God (*e. g.*, Gal. 1: 15 and 1 Cor. 15: 10).——"To the saints" not neces-

sarily to sinless men only and to them known as such to the eye of God alone, but to a body of men who were professedly consecrated to God for a holy life and publicly known as having renounced their former life of sin. "To the *faithful* in Christ Jesus"—not in the sense of special fidelity in his service, but of being *believers* in Christ. It should have been so translated—"To those who believe in Christ." "At Ephesus." *

Verse 2 gives the most common form of Paul's salutation, to which is added in his later epistles, "mercy."——"Grace" is that love which comes in manifestations of favor from God, while "peace" represents its joyful fruits in receptive human souls. Both are from God our Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:

4. According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

5. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

6. To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved:

"Blessed"—not in the sense of personal happiness, nor in a sense which either asserts or implies that he *is* praised, but rather that he *ought* to be—that he is infinitely worthy of all praise.† Here Paul calls upon all men to ascribe all glory to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for his great mercy.

The phrase "in the heavenly places" is a favorite with Paul, occurring below in 1: 20 and 2: 6 and 3: 10, and in a somewhat different sense in 6: 12. Though the word in italics—

* The words "at Ephesus" are marked as doubtful by Tischendorf, are peremptorily excluded by Conybeare and Howson; but decidedly sustained by Ellicott and others. The best manuscripts are nearly unanimous for their support. The testimony of the three oldest (S. V. A.) is peculiar, all giving the general title of the epistle "To the Ephesians," but S. and V. are starred to show that their original reading (en Ephesō) has been (supposably) omitted by a later hand.

† This peculiar class of Greek words—verbals in τος—are not participles, but words that imply worthiness to receive, a certain *oughtness* as to the being or doing. This word (ευλογητος) is to be distinguished from the participle ευλογουμενος, being in the New Testament applied to God only, while the participle is used of men—*e. g.*, "Come, ye *blessed* of my Father" (Matt. 25: 34); also of Mary as one worthy of special favor: "Blessed art thou among women" (Luke 1: 28).

"*places*"—has nothing answering to it in the Greek text, yet the reference is doubtless to locality, and here apparently to the locality of heaven as that from which our blessings descend upon us; whence Jesus came down to dwell on earth; whence also the Spirit comes with his blessings; and where we are to have our final home.

All these spiritual blessings are fitly said to be "*in Christ*" as their only source—the eternal fountain whence they flow, and in which they have their center and home.

In v. 4 and onward we have words whose meaning and application have been much controverted, and should therefore be examined with both care and candor.——Paul's verb—"hath chosen"—involves (*a.*) a choice of certain persons *out of* a supposed body; (*b.*) a choice in *past time*—for this, the tense of the verb implies—"*hath chosen*"; and the passage asserts—"before the foundation of the world": (*c.*) Reflexive action, *i. e.*, done by the agent *for himself*, as the form of the verb (Greek middle voice) clearly implies.

As to the persons chosen, the purpose or end had in view in choosing them is—that "they should become holy and blameless before him." "Holy" and "blameless" differ slightly—the former being positive, the latter negative; *i. e.*, the former signifying a real consecration to the will of God; and the latter, a character and life irreproachable. That his chosen might become such was the purpose of God in his choice of them. He would have a holy people.

The words "in love" (close of v. 4) which the authorized version appends to—"being holy and blameless before him"—are better attached to the predestination which opens v. 5: Having predestinated us *in love*—to be adopted as sons to himself through Christ. This gives a sense entirely pertinent and is equally admissible in construction.

The precise sense of the word "predestinated" is fore-defined, previously marked off, designated. It is not clear how any other or different sense can be found in the word.

This is done "according to the good pleasure of his will"—which must mean that it comes from his real benevolence—the kindness and love of his very heart.——Apparently the word "predestinate"* substantially repeats the word—"hath chosen" (v. 4) for the sake of special emphasis upon the idea of *time when*, *i. e.*, to say over again that it was *before*, anterior in time to their conversion.

All this is "to the praise of the glory of his grace";—which means not precisely to the praise of his glorious grace, but to the praise of that particular quality of his grace which is his special glory—which commends it to us as worthy of our supreme regard, and which God himself accounts to be his highest honor. This can be nothing less or other than his pure benevolence—his own eternal love.

*προορισας.

In this grace "he makes us accepted in the beloved One"—Jesus Christ his Son, "in whom he is well pleased." Our being *in him* provides for our being accepted before the Father. In the case of sinners nothing else can secure this result. And, be it remembered, their being "*in him*" implies a new heart and life.

7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

8. Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;

9. Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

"In whom we *have*"—have now—not merely are to have, but already have—redemption through his blood; ever needing, and ever receiving what we need.——Moreover, Paul said "*the* redemption"—the same which was long before promised and provided for, long time expected, and therefore the well known redemption.

This redemption is from sin, death, Satan, and comes specially through the blood of Jesus. Yet more particularly defined, it is "the forgiveness of sins," and this according to and measured by the riches of his grace. Forgiveness of sin must always presuppose the richest of grace—for how else could it ever come to beings so guilty?

By reason of this rich grace God has not only forgiven our sins, but has continued still to make that grace abound unto us in all needed forms and measures of wisdom and understanding;—"wisdom" being that which is good for counsel in questions of duty; and "understanding" having reference naturally to the exercise of our intelligence upon divine truth.

The riches of God's grace acting upon our intelligence is illustrated in his "making known the mystery of his will"—that great gospel scheme which for ages was in many points an unrevealed mystery; but through God's good pleasure purposed in himself, begotten of his own love and of nothing extraneous to this love, has in these latter times been made known.

10. That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him:

The purpose of God as here shown is that ultimately all things shall conspire to the universal supremacy of Christ. In the fullness of times, the plan will be consummated and the supreme headship of Christ will be recognized as its ultimate result. All things in heaven and in earth—all beings above and below—shall become one in submission to his sway and one in glory to his name. But obviously we should do violence to the words of our

passage, and no less, to the whole course of thought in this context, if we were to force this language to affirm that lost spirits in hell are included. Jesus himself has shut the door against them so emphatically, so decisively, so solemnly, that we can not suppose Paul could intend to say that Christ recalls those words, revokes those decisions, and brings them at last into his heavenly kingdom.

11. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

12. That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

"In whom we become heirs also; *i. e.*, we come to inherit all blessings as our divinely given portion. This figure of becoming *heirs* of God is a favorite with Paul. Under it we inherit all blessings from God as his adopted sons.

Once more Paul traces this gift back to God's eternal choice which follows the counsel of his own will, using the same word for "*fore-determined*" as in the beginning of v. 5. This purpose, moreover, is here thought of as that of a Being whose ceaseless and infinite energies accomplish all things, according to his own will.——And this divine will designs that his people should promote and exalt his own glory and praise—the "we" of this passage being apparently the Jews who were the first converts to Christ, over against the "*ye also*" of v. 13, who were Gentiles. But whether we or ye, Jews or Gentiles, the one purpose of God contemplated a people who should be to the praise of his eternal love, and of his infinitely wise and glorious scheme of salvation.

Pausing here to review the contents of this remarkable passage (v. 3–12), it may not be amiss for me to say that I have been by no means unmindful that these verses have long been theological battle-ground for contending systems and schools of theology; yet neither could I be unmindful that my first duty both to the public and to God is that of an expositor of Paul's words. Having performed this duty, my appropriate work is done.—— However (as suggested in my introduction) it is legitimate to study the stand-point of view from which Paul saw these truths and wrote this passage. He was thinking of his three years' labor in Ephesus; of the utter moral wreck and ruin in which he found the idolaters of that city; of the amazing change wrought in the souls of a portion of them, and of the ultimate grounds for that interposing grace of God which had plucked them as brands from the general burning.——Now at this point in these thoughts, it is simply indisputable that Paul traces the salvation of the saved ones out of that population to the foregoing plans of God and to the fore-working of his saving power. All was due to the eternal love in which all the gifts of heavenly grace and all the working instrumentalities resulting in their conversion had their origin.——So much Paul obviously held and clearly affirmed.

Moreover it is obvious that in this passage Paul had no thought of developing a fully rounded theological system. On the nature of free moral agency, he advances (in a formal way) no opinion —discusses no theory. As to any philosophy which would adjust this free human agency to the higher divine agency by which God works all things after the counsel of his own will, he is entirely silent. Whether he held any philosophical views as to this point, he neither affirmed nor denied. He certainly did not imply that the fore-chosen ones would or could have been saved without their own free repentance and their own personal faith. More than this; it is clear from his own account of his gospel labors in that city, that when he "went from house to house, warning *every man* night and day with tears," he was in no way embarrassed, hampered, restricted, by the supposition that God had provided nothing for the salvation of the masses; that only a few—a select and relatively small number—had redemption provided and offered to their acceptance. It is very safe to assume that he pressed the gospel of this salvation upon every man he met, and labored to make every such man believe and feel that God would never shut him off if he would not shut off himself. This was shown very forcibly at the crisis point of Paul's sermon at Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13: 45, 46):—"It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you" (Jews); but seeing ye put it from you and *judge yourselves unworthy* of *everlasting life*, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." God would fain have blessed you with his gospel; but since ye elect yourselves unto reprobation by "judging yourselves unworthy of life," since ye thus foredoom your souls to death eternal, we have no alternative, neither has God, but to leave you to your choice.——So when Paul, preaching to those Jews at Rome (Acts 28: 23-29), "expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from morning till evening, and some believed the things spoken and some believed not, he closed with one word from Isaiah;—"For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes *have they closed;* lest they should see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known unto you, therefore, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it." If the Jews saw fit to close their eyes lest they should see the gospel's light and lest God should convert them, upon themselves and not upon God would rest the responsibility.—— Paul's philosophy of the plan of salvation had therefore a large place for the free agency of man. It had also unquestionably a place for the fore-ordering purpose of God, yet manifestly it never brought these two distinct agencies into collision with each other, nor did it at all rule out the human by unduly honoring the divine. In fact the divine was honored in and through the human, it being an eternal principle or law in the wise fore-ordering of God's universal moral government, never to over-

rule the free moral agency of his creatures. Such as would not have an offered salvation were left mournfully with grief and tears, yet of moral necessity—to their own fatal choice—the compassionate Father still testifying to his own pity and grief—"How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?" (Hos. 11: 8).

Thus we may resort to Paul's actual life and labors to find his philosophy of free agency and his way of practically harmonizing such agency with his views of God's fore-ordering purpose and choice.

13. In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise,

14. Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

In v. 13 the original commences—"In whom ye also"—and there leaves his sentence incomplete for the reader to fill out. The authorized version supplies "*trusted*"—which may possibly be Paul's meaning. But it seems to me better to go back more fully into the great drift of Paul's thought, viz., to *their* "being also to the praise of his glory;" thus—(v. 12): "To the end that we, the first Jewish converts—should be to the praise of his glory; (v. 13), in whom also are ye (Gentile converts) to the praise of his glory, having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in which gospel ye also, having believed, were sealed," etc.

This sealing was by the promised Holy Spirit—the Spirit given according to Christ's promise oft repeated (John 14: 26 and 15: 26 and 16: 7–15). The ensealing to which Paul often refers is no other than the assurance of faith and hope begotten by the Spirit's own witness to the heart that we are sons of God. (See Rom. 8: 15, 16.) "Ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Father, Father." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." This expresses the fact without the figure of sealing. This figure, however, appears in Paul under the word translated as here "earnest" * or pledge: "Who hath also sealed us and given the *earnest* of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. 1: 22 and 5: 5). This word implies a part payment of a promised sum, advanced to guaranty the full payment in due time. Such part payments recognize the obligation and signify the purpose to make up the balance promised. So all the present gifts of the Spirit testify to us that God recognizes us as his adopted sons, and will make good to us in due season our whole inheritance.——In the clause "Until the redemption of the purchased possession," the original words favor—not to say, demand—the sense *unto* rather than "until"—a pledge looking *toward*—a pledge that *he will* redeem

* αρραβων

his purchased people. He has bought them by redemption from sin, Satan and all evil; and now, by the gifts of his Spirit pledges to them the ultimate redemption of this redemptive purchase. They are his acquired inheritance, bought with redeeming blood. Peter (1 Eps. 2: 9) has the same word as Paul here to indicate that saints are God's *people of acquisition*—his purchased ones.——Thus, as Paul's words testify, the gift of the Spirit is a pledge looking toward and unto two results; (1.) Guarantying our complete redemption; (2.) Evincing and displaying God's glory—the latter too precious ever to be left out of view.

15. Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,

16. Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

17. That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

18. The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

In v. 15, "I also" looks back to v. 13. and puts this "I" in special relation to "ye also," standing there. He would say—"As ye also were to be to the praise of God's glory, so I too, having heard of your faith, cease not to give thanks for you. I also will celebrate the glory of his grace."

"Having heard of your faith and love"—for at this writing Paul had been absent some four or five years, and was therefore deeply gratified to hear of their well-sustained faith and love. It became to him a precious theme for both praise and prayer.——Noticeably his Greek says—not *your* faith, which might imply that faith was general, possibly universal among them—but "the faith that is *among you*"—a phrase which quietly suggests that while some faith was there, it might be in a few individuals only.——What he prays for in their behalf, he enlarges upon for their comfort and quickening, viz., that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ—his own Father as also *our* Father (so John 20: 17 and Matt. 27: 46), and especially the Father of *glory*, *i. e.*, glory in the sense—this glorious scheme of love which so exalts his name—who is therefore a sublimely glorious Father (See Acts 7: 2 and 1 Cor. 2: 8), may give you the spirit of wisdom and of revelation as to the knowledge of himself, these being among the choice gifts of the Holy Ghost.

The eyes of your *heart* (rather than "understanding"—such being the improved text) being enlightened—opened to spiritual apprehensions—to the end that ye may know what that hope is to which he has called you; and how rich is the glory of his inheritance in the saints—a truly wonderful accumulation of terms,

setting forth this inheritance in the saints in the point of its glory, and this glory in the aspect of its richness. Oh, might they but know this! Would it not bring a marvelous inspiration toward gratitude, trust, love, and the spirit of a consecrated obedience!

19. And what *is* the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

20. Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*,

21. Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

Paul's words here seem chosen for their intense expressiveness and their wealth of meaning, yet their very accumulation suggests that they were all too poor to measure the vastness of his thought; and, moreover, that in his own sense of it, his loftiest thoughts were still indefinitely below the reality.——Here is "exceeding greatness" of power in our behalf—greatness surpassing thought, having no adequate illustration, yet its best is in that energy of the might of his power which he put forth in raising Jesus from the dead and then exalting him to sit at his right hand on his own heavenly throne, high above all other most exalted beings of his universe. This accumulation of various orders of intelligent beings is purposely made exhaustive to signify that however many there may be, or however high in dignity and power, Jesus was exalted high above them all. See in 1 Pet. 3: 22 a similar accumulation of these titles to embrace all the glorious hierarchies of heaven.

This analogy between the power which redeems God's people and the power which raised Jesus from the grave and exalted him to the highest throne of heaven, is very common in the writings of Paul—clearly illustrative to his mind, we must suppose, and not less dear to his heart. We shall often meet it in various connections. (See below, 2: 6, 7.)

22. And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church,

23. Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

The consummation was reached when the Father had put all things under the feet of the risen, glorified Redeemer, and had made him Supreme Head over all things to his church. The words and the thought also here seem to follow Psalm 8:—"Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels; thou hast crowned him with glory and honor; thou hast put all things under his feet;" in view of which, the Psalmist cries out:—O Lord, our

Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" The writer to the Hebrews also (2: 6–9) finds the Messiah in these words.* Paul's reference to the Psalm is brief, his thought being specially upon Christ's relation to the church as its Head, the church itself being (in figure) his body.

In what sense is this body, the church, called "the fullness?" Is it in the *numerical* sense—the full number, the sum total, purposely including all its individual parts? This seems to be out of harmony with the current of thought here—a thing inept and without occasion. It seems to me that the basis of Paul's conception is the receptivity of every rational soul to God—its capability of being filled with the Spirit and with its divine blessings. From this elementary conception he readily advances to think of the entire church as in like manner having a receptivity for Christ, and as being filled with all rich spiritual blessings—regenerating, sanctifying, unto all the fruits of holiness. The church, his body, thus filled with himself, might fitly be called his "pleroma"—his "fullness." Then to complete the conception, it is the fullness of Him (Christ) who fills all things with all, *i. e.*, with all there is in them; whose presence fills the universe and whose power diffuses blessings every-where as his sun diffuses light. Thus He who fills the universe with all the good which there is in it is the same who fills the church, his body, with all her spiritual life, purity, glory!

CHAPTER II.

Dead in sin they had lived under the power of Satan and of all fleshly lusts (v. 1–3); but God in great mercy had raised them to spiritual life, even as he raised Christ from death to life (v. 4, 5), and brought them to sit together amid heavenly blessings in Jesus, to show forth the riches of his grace (v. 6, 7); for their salvation is all of grace through faith and not at all of meritorious works (v. 8, 9), they having been new-born to God unto good works (v. 10). Let them therefore remember their former Gentile, Godless life (v. 11, 12), and, in contrast, their present life in Christ, their peace, brought nigh to God and made one in his kingdom, whether Jew or Gentile (v. 13–18), built upon Christ into the great spiritual temple in which God dwells by his Spirit (v. 19–22).

1. And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

* My views as to the true interpretation of this Psalm 8, may be seen in my "Commentary on Psalms."

2. Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

3. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

The apostle proceeds to apply practically to his Ephesian converts the great truth suggested above (v. 19, 20), conveyed under the same analogy, viz., that God raises dead souls to spiritual life, even as he raised Jesus from the dead.

The order and succession of Paul's thoughts here are very peculiar. First of all, in the foreground: "*You also*" (v. 1), and then a long description of their deplorable case through three verses, before he returns to fill out the thought by saying that in God's great mercy and love, he had lifted them out of death into life, even as he had raised Jesus from bodily death into glorious life.

"Quickened" is brought forward in our authorized version; but Paul did not introduce this word till he reached v. 5. There can be no doubt, however, that in thought it belongs here.

The meaning of this nearly obsolete word is simply *raised to life.* They were "dead in trespasses and sins"—dead, not in the sense of having no mind, but of having a bad mind—not of being without moral sense, but of having perverted their moral sense and crushed it down—not of being powerless as to any moral good, but only of being averse. They were dead in the special point of "trespasses and sins;" lost to self-rescue, self-resuscitation; borne along according to the drift and course of this world; according to the will and the rule of "the Prince of the power of the air"—the spirit now working with terrible energy in all hearts rebellious toward God.

The phrase, "The Prince of the power of the air," has been explained variously to mean: (*a.*) "Prince of the power" in the sense of the powerful prince; (*b.*) The prince over the powers—*i. e.*, the powerful angels under his bidding there; or, (*c.*) The prince over the realm, the *kingdom*, located in the atmosphere—the latter being best supported. The "air" is obviously here the *locality*—the region and realm of their range and haunt, if not also of their proper abode—a locality sub-celestial and supramundane—below the heavens yet above and around the earth. It is not said or even intimated that this is to be their locality for ever. Supposably it may be such only during the probation of man on this earth; or (we may suggest) till the millennium.

"Children of disobedience"—this "disobedience" implying more or less knowledge of God and of duty, and a persistent, inveterate resistance to God's claims. They will not be persuaded. Of course they have light and conviction of truth to sin against and

are therefore utterly without excuse, being guilty of intelligent, deliberate rebellion.—Among such sinners we all, both Jews and Gentiles, were formerly living, yielding to the sway of all fleshly lusts, and also of those passions which have their seat in the *mind*. So "we were by nature" all alike "children of wrath."

The words, "by nature children of wrath," have been held by some to mean, or at least to imply, that *nature itself* is the subject of God's wrath, and consequently must be itself sin. Yet this is not what Paul affirms. All he says is that men are children of wrath by *nature—i. e.*, in consequence of what is involved in their birth from sinning parents.*

To justify this construction it would seem to be enough to say that this is all that the words mean, and precisely what, by fair construction, they should be assumed to mean.—But beyond this it is legitimate to bring into account the moral possibilities and impossibilities of the case. If nature itself is sin, who is morally responsible for it? Who is the Author of nature? And yet again: Since the divine word itself defines sin to be "transgression of the law," what "law" does this nature transgress? And where does the voluntary agency come in which makes transgression blameworthy? Whose conscience can ever be convicted of sin for having the nature with which and in which he was born? Yet further: How can it be supposed that God's wrath burns against that which has no moral consciousness, which involves no knowledge of duty, in which is no conscious disobedience? ——On the other hand, interpreting the words to mean only that men are sinners *in consequence* of their birth from sinning parents, the passage looks toward the universality of sin in our world, but does not locate its guilt in human nature itself. The antecedents of sin are not necessarily themselves sin. Indeed, in the nature of the case there must be some not-sinning and not-sinful occasions; *i. e.*, antecedents of sin *before the first sin*. For to deny this involves the absurdity of *sin before the first sin*.

So much it seemed necessary to say here in refutation of that construction of this passage, or of that inference from it, which carries the moral responsibility for this nature back to its divine Author.

Moreover the word "wrath," when spoken of God, must never be construed to mean or imply an effervescence or outpouring of malign passion, as it often does when said of bad men. This can not be implied when wrath is ascribed to God for the good reason that his nature forbids it. It does however involve deep and earnest displeasure against sin, a holy abhorrence of sin for what it is; and a deep conviction of his own obligation to repress and

* Beyond question "nature" (Greek *phusis*) means primarily, birth; secondarily, the results or consequences of birth; and consequently, *by nature* means, primarily, *by birth*, the word "by" denoting in consequence directly or remotely, of such birth. *How* in consequence, by what laws of connection, the case itself must answer.

punish it in the persons of its deliberate, incorrigible perpetrators. It is the feeling of a good moral governor, bound by the laws of his own nature, and also (which comes to the same result) bound by the principles of his own government to punish transgressions that can be repressed in no other way.——Yet again; it is entirely legitimate to interpret the word "wrath" when said of God, in harmony with his rich mercy and with his much (or great) love; for, be it carefully noted that Paul in the same breath speaks of God's wrath and then of his mercy; for having said "wrath" he then goes on to say;—"But (in the utmost harmony with this wrath) God, being rich in mercy, on account of his great love in which he hath loved us—even *us* then being dead in sins, hath made us alive together with Christ, and *as* he raised him from death to life. Paul is particular to say most explicitly that God's wrath against those who were born to wrath ("children of wrath") is by no means in conflict with his rich mercy and his great love toward the very same lost souls. It was *while* we were yet sinners that Christ died for us. All the wrath felt against us because of our sin did not shut off his great love for us. Therefore, it is legitimate to say that God's wrath against sin and sinners must be construed in harmony and never in conflict with the riches of his mercy and the greatness of his love.

4. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5. Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

6. And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus:

7. That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in *his* kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus.

The connection and course of thought here have been anticipated above. The antithesis between God's wrath against sinners—such by nature—and his rich mercy and great love,—is indeed marvelous! It is Paul's ruling thought in this passage. Mark how he turns it over and over: "By grace are ye saved"; "By grace are ye saved through faith; and this being saved is not of yourselves; it is the free gift of God" (v. 8). He would make the fact stand out most distinctly that it was precisely *when* we were dead in sin that God lifted us into life, *even as* He lifted Christ from the grave into his resurrection life, and as his chosen word signifies—*along with* this raising of Christ, as if it were *wrought* by the same Almighty fiat of spiritual power.

This remarkable analogy—its antithetic points so harmoniously adjusted—will not be apprehended in its full strength unless we remember that the raising of Christ from the dead is often ascribed to the same spirit of power as that which raises souls dead in sin to their new life in God. See Christ's own testimony (John 5:

21, 24): "As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." "He that hath my word and believeth is passed from death unto life."——Paul presents this same analogy often; *e. g.* "That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so, we also should walk in newness of life; for if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death (we dying as he died), we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6: 4, 5). "And ye, being dead in your sins, hath he quickened together with Him" (Christ). (Col. 2: 13).

The similar work wrought by the Father, first upon his Son Jesus, and then upon his people who are in Jesus, is manifested (*a.*) In giving life to both—"quickening":—(*b.*) In raising them up together, *i. e.*, similarly:—(*c.*) In making them sit together in the heavenly world.——This similar working of divine power, or, better, the similarity in each of these three points—is put in our English version by the word "together":—"quickened together"; "raised up together"; "seated together";—but in Paul's Greek, by coupling the same Greek preposition (συν) with each verb, to denote a similar and analogous action or energy in each of these verbs. This makes his statement exceedingly definite and beautifully expressive.

As to the third stage of the process—the seating of Christ and of his people together in *the* heavenly place (Paul said *the* heavenly world) the question may arise whether that looks to the real heaven, or whether in regard to his people it may terminate with bringing them into heavenly experience of Christ's presence here on earth. To which I judge the answer must be—To the real and final heaven; for as the raising of Christ was but half done when his risen body appeared on earth during forty days, and was completed only when, having ascended on high, he became seated at the right hand of the Father; so the raising of his people in a manner so fully analogous is still incomplete till they too shall be raised to sit together with Christ in the very heaven.——All this is "*in* Christ Jesus"—a truth which Paul is never weary of reaffirming; which he would have his readers never forget.

The final end of all these great works of divine wisdom and mercy, Paul's philosophical mind loves to contemplate and often present—as here;—viz., "that in the ages to come, God might show forth (for his own glory)—for himself, as his Greek word implies—the surpassing riches of his grace in his kindness toward us—we being in Christ. To reveal the *great wealth of his love*, is, thus, the final end sought.——But where lie these "ages" (or aions) "to come"? Do they lie between the hour then present, and the second coming of Christ? or may they legitimately be supposed to extend still onward along the cycles of eternal duration?——So far as I can see, we can not exclude the former period, nor need we the latter. Why may not these revelations of God's great mercy in the salvation of the lost fill both the history of earth and the history of heaven? On what authority or by

what principle shall we attempt to rule either earth or heaven out of the pale of their development and manifestation?——That the "aions to come" began and had their first range of succession in our world's time, during the gospel age, seems to be beyond question. Admitting this, the fact shows that Paul did not assume the end of all earthly things to be then near at hand. There were long ages to come yet in which God had purposed to show forth the exceeding riches of his love in saving sinners. Ellicott seems to suppose that all these *aions* to come lie this side the eternal state, and vigorously infers (as above said) that Paul had no thought of the second coming and the end of the gospel age as being near. I differ from him only in the point of assuming that the same showing forth of God's surpassing grace may fill the everlasting aions of eternity as well as the *not* everlasting but very long aions of our world's time.

8. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

9. Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

"And that, not of yourselves:"—yet the reader of our English version is perplexed to judge which is the true antecedent of the word "that," whether grace, or faith, or the being saved. The language in which Paul wrote is more definite than ours; hence the gender of his words shows that his "*that*" refers not directly to "grace," nor to "faith," but to *being saved.* What he said, therefore, was that this salvation is not of yourselves, but is the free gift of God. Moreover, in v. 9, he still speaks, not of grace, nor of faith, but of this *salvation* "which is not of works," so that, consequently, no man can boast. Manifestly he had no occasion to say in this v. 9 that grace is not of works, or that faith is not of works; but he had reason to say that *salvation* is not of works.

Yet further, all boasting is still more peremptorily excluded by the fact that all the moral good that is in us is there by reason of the new birth we have from God. We are his making and his work, new-born to a holy life by his spiritually creative power. The passage manifestly alludes by way of figure lying in his words, to the original creation of man in Eden. We are thus new created *unto* good works—to the end that we may do good works—may be always doing good works and none other but good. Therefore, while Paul is careful to say that salvation is not by works, *i. e.*, of merit, he is also careful to say that the new creative birth was designed of God to be the beginning of a *new life of good works.*——God has in advance prepared, marked out, this highway of holiness for his people to walk in. Isaiah saw it and

spoke of it centuries before:—"An highway shall be there and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness" (35: 8).

11. Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

12. That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

It is always in order, always spiritually useful, to remember the old state of moral ruin and desolation from which the grace of God has brought us deliverance. So here Paul calls upon his Ephesian converts to remember their old heathen life—how they were scornfully called "the Uncircumcised" by those who took pride in their circumcision, though it was in their case only a *hand-made thing*—only in and of the flesh—not of the heart. For even the Old Testament Scriptures carefully brought out the spiritual work which circumcision symbolized, and never designed that men should rest in the mere external rite. See Deut. 10: 16 and 30: 6 and Jer. 4: 4; also in the New Testament, Rom. 2: 28, 29, Phil. 3: 3 and Col. 2: 11.

In their former heathen life, they had no Christ; were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; were left out (apparently) from the covenants of promise; had no hope—*i. e.*, none within knowledge—for they knew not then what God had really prepared for the Gentile world:—and were therefore in a state which they must have felt to be hopeless. And were atheists, Godless in the world. Ellicott remarks that this word "atheists" ("without God" in our version) may be taken either as active, as neuter, or as passive:—(*a*) active in the sense of positively denying, disowning God; or (*b*) neuter in the sense of being ignorant of God, and so, of having nothing consciously to do with God; or (*c*) passive in the sense of being forsaken of God, abandoned, left out to their hopeless doom. Perhaps the last named is most in the line of thought in this context, which aims to set forth not so much their guilt as their desolate surroundings—the darkness and sadness of their Pagan life, upon which at the time referred to, no ray of gospel light had yet dawned.

13. But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

14. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us;*

15. Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace;

16. And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

17. And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

18. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

Here is the other side of the contrast—their case now, set over against their case then. Then far off; now brought nigh, and this by the blood of Christ—this blood being shed alike for all, whether Jew or Gentile. It is Paul's strong point throughout this passage that all there is of hope and blessedness in their present as contrasted with their past, is due to Christ. He has died equally for all; his hand has broken down the partition wall which so long shut Gentile away from Jew and out of God's ancient temple. His word of authority had annulled those ancient ritual ordinances and so had demolished that long-standing barrier whose caste-power had kept Jew and Gentile asunder. By his cross he had brought the two peoples into one new man, so making peace between them, with not the least occasion thenceforth for the old antagonism. One precious proof of the peace and oneness henceforth to obtain between Jew and Gentile lay in the fact that "we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." The same divine Spirit led both Jew and Gentile to the same great Father. No Jew could have access to the Father save by this one Spirit, and no Gentile either. However much either party would, neither one could have the least pre-eminence above the other in this respect—so entirely vital to all Christian life, viz., their access to God through the Spirit.

In this passage the reader will notice how much is said of the old "enmity," and of the newly found "peace" between Jew and Gentile. He will see good reason for Paul's strong views and feelings on these points if he will recall to mind what Paul himself had suffered from that enmity and enjoyed in the prospective peace. That enmity broke off his missionary travels and labors; imperiled his life; cost him his long confinement at Cesarea; his successive arraignments before the Jewish Council, before Felix, before Festus and Agrippa; his shipwreck; his two years' confinement at Rome. Still smarting under this persistent, bigoted, malign enmity; comforted only with the precious assurance that God's truth must triumph ere long and this enmity give place to the peace that Jesus had bought on the cross, he is now laboring to impress upon his Ephesian brethren the glorious inheritance of gospel peace to which they have come.

19. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God:

20. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone;*

21. In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord:

22. In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

No more what ye were (as said in v. 12) but fellow-citizens having common rights with all the saints and at home in the house and family of God; domestics of his household; "sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty."——"Built upon the foundation," *i. e.*, upon the truth preached by apostles and prophets, for only in this sense were they built upon any men, even the best and most inspired.——But who are meant here by the "prophets"? Shall we say, those of the Old Testament, or those of the New? The latter are apparently in the apostle's mind—for there were "prophets" in that Christian age, the gift of prophecy being one of the gifts of the Spirit; because apostles were put first in order as superior to prophets—while the reverse order should be expected if the reference were to prophets of the Old Testament; but especially because this sense of the word "prophets" is demanded by the parallel passages; *e. g.*, Ephes. 3: 5: "As it is *now* revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit"; also 4: 11 and 1 Cor. 12: 28.——"Christ the chief corner stone," is an allusion to Psalm 118: 22; of which Peter also has made similar use (1 Eps. 2: 4–6).

The figure common with Paul which represents each Christian's body as a living temple within which the Holy Spirit dwells (see 1 Cor. 3: 16, 17 and 6: 19 and 2 Cor. 6: 16) is slightly modified here, the universal church being such a temple, and each new individual church, or better, each new convert, is a new stone laid into its walls, causing the temple walls to rise with each accession, and thus grow into one vast temple in the Lord within which God dwells by his Spirit.——Ye also (Paul would say) have come to this distinguished honor—that of being builded into this glorious temple.

Very noticeable is the grouping together of all the persons of the Trinity in close connection, as here, v. 22. "In whom" (Jesus Christ) "ye are builded together for an habitation of God" (the Father), "through the Holy Ghost." There was a special charm for Paul in this precious grouping. It implied the active co-operation of each person of the Trinity in the scheme of salvation; it accorded to each due honor, and it doubtless suggested the perfection of this redemptive work, wrought out by the somewhat distinct yet harmonious and united energies of Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER III.

Addressing them as then a prisoner in their behalf (v. 1), he is diverted to speak of the special commission given him by revelation to bear the gospel to Gentiles (v. 2–4); an extension of its blessings, long almost unknown (v. 5, 6), but through God's great grace committed to Paul that he might preach these unsearchable riches of Christ among Gentiles (v. 7, 8), which limitless extension of gospel blessings would reveal to all the hosts of heaven God's manifold wisdom (v. 9, 10), according to his eternal purpose (v. 11, 12). Therefore let them not be disheartened by what he suffers for them (v. 13). The blessings he implores of God in their behalf (v. 14–21).

1. For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

This entire chapter is a parenthesis—a digression suggested by this allusion to his then pending imprisonment at Rome because he would preach Christ's gospel to Gentiles. Following out this suggestive fact, he fills the chapter with consecutive thoughts and experiences hinging upon his gospel mission to the Gentile world, and leading on to the great plans of God which had provided such mercy for the wide world.

The construction of v. 1 is not this—For this cause I Paul *am* now the prisoner, etc., but rather this: For this cause I Paul, being the prisoner of Christ for you Gentiles, beseech you (chap. 4: 1) that ye walk worthily of such a calling as ye have from God.

The first words here—"For this cause"—refer back to the close of the previous chapter, meaning: For the sake of building you up into that glorious spiritual temple.——We must not forget that Paul wrote this letter from Rome during that very imprisonment which grew out of his arrest at Jerusalem because he preached to Gentiles (see Acts 21: 27 and onward through chapters 22–28).

2. If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

3. How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in a few words;

4. Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ,)

5. Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

6. That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the

same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

"If ye have heard" scarcely implies the least doubt as to their having heard, but modestly recalls the circumstances to their minds.——"Dispensation"—the trust or commission given me to publish God's rich grace toward you.——"The mystery" (v. 3) is so called because long unrevealed, though now made known—the mysterious thing being the equal share in gospel privileges which God gives to Gentiles. After long ages of exclusion, all covenants and promises being restricted to Abraham and his posterity, the truth at last came forth to light, that Gentiles are to be fellow-heirs of all these promised blessings, and are to have the whole gospel equally with Jews.——This mystery, Paul says, (v. 3) was first made known to him by special revelation. This he had already spoken of briefly—*i. e.*, in this epistle (not in some other). Compare 1: 9 and 2: 13, and especially 3: 6.——In v. 5 "the prophets" must be those of the Christian, not of the ancient Jewish, age.——In v. 6 the point of equal fellowship is emphasized by repetition: a common heirship; in a common body, the church; by a common partaking of all the promises.

7. Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

8. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

9. And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

10. To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

11. According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

12. In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

Paul can not think of his great gospel commission to the Gentiles without being overwhelmed with a sense of the miracle of mercy manifested upon him in that though less than the least of all saints, he should be honored with this service of preaching among Gentiles Christ's riches of grace—riches that no human thought can measure—no human speech adequately express—all untraceable, unsearchable!

The ultimate "intent" of this great gospel scheme (v. 10) is to make known throughout all heaven the manifold, endlessly varied, wisdom of God, and to make this known *in and through the*

church, in their passive, not active, relations; *i. e.*, not through what they do, but through what God does in regard to them, the special point in mind here being the great enlargement of the gospel scheme during the Christian age as contrasted with its apparent limitations during the ages before Christ came.——All this was in accordance with God's eternal purpose—was not any new or after-thought, but was fully embraced in the gospel scheme as originally framed in the mind of God.——It was wrought out—carried into effect—in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom therefore we have all freedom of utterance, the freest expression of our heart's desire—an open and easy access with all confidence by reason of our faith in him.

13. Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

Wherefore (*i. e.*, because we have such a Savior and such ground for confidence in him), I implore (better than "desire") you not to lose heart in my tribulations for you;—not to be discouraged because of them nor oppressed with sympathy for my sufferings, because these sufferings are really your glory. They come of your exalted gospel privileges, and of the fact that God loves you so well as to let his servants suffer bitter persecution for your sake.

14. For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

15. Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

"For this cause" (that ye may be full of courage and hopefulness) I bow my knees in prayer.——After "the Father," the best manuscripts omit the words—"of our Lord Jesus Christ." The prominent thought here is of God, not as the Father of Jesus Christ, but as the Father of every branch of his great family of saints whether in earth or heaven. In Paul's Greek the word for "family" suggests the *father* at the head of it. All this great family in every branch takes name from its Father, as all children should. They are God's sons and daughters—a *godly* people.

16. That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

17. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

18. May be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

19. And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.

Here are grouped the special objects of his prayer in their behalf:—first, that the blessings given may be in measure "*according* to the riches of his glory"—"his glory" signifying here that which he accounts his chief *glory*, viz., his ineffable love—or if we say, the fullness of his divine perfections, still, of these, love is evermore central and supreme, pervading all with its unspeakable beauty and excellence.——According to the wealth of this incomparable love, Paul prays that God's blessings upon them may be measured.

The specific blessings asked for begin with *spiritual strength* —that they may be mightily strengthened by the Spirit whose very name and synonym is "power" (Luke 24: 49 and Acts 1: 8).——"In the inner man"—not the outer; not the body, but the soul. (See 2 Cor. 4: 16);—or, which looks to the same result, and is God's way of making the Christian heart "strong" by the Spirit:—"that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith" —this indwelling signifying precisely the manifestation of Jesus which himself promised (John 16: 13–15 and 15: 26) as to be wrought by the Holy Ghost. Faith in Christ's promise to this effect brings the blessing.——The place of this abode is to be the *heart*—the power being not of words warbling on the tongue; not of speculations revolving in the brain; but Christ's own presence abiding in the heart—the heart as the seat of love, the organ of man's controlling will-power, the home for the spirit of self-consecration and holy purpose. This heart of man Paul prays may be imbued through and through with the power of a present Christ.——With love in your heart at the very bottom of your character—as the root to the tree or the foundation to the building that rests upon it—my prayer is that ye may be able —may be *made strong*. Paul's word means—to comprehend as with firm grasp of mind that shall fully take in the utmost dimensions of Christ's love—its breadth and length and depth and height—as if Paul would help us to great conceptions by suggesting material size and vastness. But his precise thought is that ye may know the love Christ has for you though that love surpasses your utmost reach of mind or utmost sense of greatness—to the end that ye may be filled—not precisely "with" but "*unto* all the fullness of God;"—filled till you reach this uttermost limit—viz., all the fullness which belongs to God—which is provided for in his storehouse of boundless supply.

What grand conceptions are these of the depth and glory of the Savior's love—of the sublime possibilities of comprehending it in thought; of knowing it till all its power shall take effect in the soul, and we are filled indeed up to the measure of God's unspeakable fullness!

For all this, Paul testifies that he prays in their behalf, that it may become real in their personal experience.

20. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

21. Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

The crowning glory of this prayer is that it is no idle wishing; it asks for no merely imaginary but never to be realized blessings; does not raise expectation above the power of the Great Giver to fulfill; but addresses One who is gloriously able to do all—yea far more than all, we can ask or even conceive in thought.——Paul speaks of this great power in God to do for his people as being "*according to* the power that works with energy within us"—words which must be supposed to refer as usual, to the same power which God wrought upon Christ in raising him from the dead and exalting him to sit at his own right hand in heaven. The power that could so easily accomplish all this in Jesus Christ is proved to be equal to any result it may propose to achieve for his people.

To the great God, having such power, capable of working with all this inexpressible energy, committed to do abundantly above all we can ask and think of—let glory be given in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations of aions of aions—long as the everlasting cycles of eternal duration shall move on!

As there is no conceivable limit to the riches of his grace: no limit to the vastness of his power to uplift, sustain and bless his believing loving children, so let there be no limit of time or of measure to the glory ascribed to his great name!—And to this prayer, let all people—all the vast populations of earth and of heaven—say amen!

Pausing here a moment to retrace the course of thought in this wonderful chapter with an eye toward the particular truth which had such suggestive power on the mind and heart of Paul, inspiring such prayer and such lofty conceptions of Christ's love and of God's fullness of grace and plenitude of power, we may readily find it in that "mystery made known to him by special revelation," viz., the long unrevealed plan of God under which the gospel was to go to the Gentile world. That Gentiles were to be fellow-heirs with the seed of Abraham; of the same "body of Christ," the church; partakers of all the promises made in Christ through the gospel;—this it was that filled the mind of Paul; that lifted his soul as upon the ground-swell of the ocean; that bore him up to the height of these lofty conceptions and laid open to his view the immeasurable glories of the gospel. In this grand enlargement of the gospel plan, he saw the wealth of God's mercies and the glory of his great thoughts of love for our race. It bore him back into those sublime prophecies of Isaiah who had risen to the height of this great argument ages before, and who had felt the sublime inspiration of this theme—*salvation for the whole Gentile world!* Remarkably these two master minds—each in his respective dispensation, Isaiah in the old and Paul in the new, were drawn into a common sympathy and lifted to a common sublimity of thought and of emotion under the power of this same great truth. It scarcely need be said that the

thought of Paul, as of Isaiah, was—not of a gospel planned of God for the meager few out of the Gentile world, but for the surging masses; not for certain limited localities but for "the ends of the earth;" not merely sending forth some scattered rays of divine light and knowledge, but rather of the earth made "full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

CHAPTER IV.

Paul exhorts to a worthy Christian life (v. 1); in real humility and forbearance (v. 2), and specially in the spirt of unity and the fellowship of love (v. 3); because the church is one body; Christians have one hope (v. 4), with one common Savior and one divine Father (v. 5, 6); albeit there are diversities of spiritual gifts (v. 7). Christ has given diverse classes of spiritual teachers variously endowed by himself (v. 8–11); all for the purpose of perfecting the Christian life of his people (v. 12) into the unity of faith and of Christian doctrine (v. 13) and full development from Christian childhood to a strong and true manhood (v. 14); growing up into Christ who fills the functions of head to the spiritual body (v. 15, 16). Therefore, let them not walk as the heathen (v. 17–19), but as they have learned of Christ, in the new life (v. 20–24), truthful toward each other (v. 25); self-controlled in temper (v. 26, 27); not stealing (v. 28), nor talking foolishly (v. 29), nor grieving the Spirit (v. 30); but eschewing all malicious selfishness (v. 31); cherishing all kindness, forgiveness and mutual love (v. 32).

1. I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

2. With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love;

3. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Paul resumes his exhortation at the point where he broke off at the beginning of chapter 3, putting his words in this emphatic order: "Entreat you, therefore, do I, the prisoner of the Lord, that ye walk worthily of the calling by which ye are called" (as I have been showing you). The logical term "therefore" looks back for its ground to the points made in the previous chapter: Inasmuch as ye have such a gospel, welcoming you to an equal participation with Jews in all its privileges; inasmuch as ye have such a Savior, mighty beyond your utmost thought to do abundantly more than ye can ask or think; rich in his love more than ye can ever comprehend; O then, see that ye walk worthily of

such a calling, into such fellowship with Christ and communion with all his saints!

"Prisoner *of* the Lord" should be "*in* the Lord," the sense being not, I, the Lord's prisoner; but I, though indeed a prisoner, yet am none the less "*in* the Lord," and find such living in my Lord to be my paradise. Be not, therefore, afflicted because of my imprisonment, but rather think of me as evermore joyful because "*in the Lord.*" Moreover, live ye, not in a spirit of pride or overbearing haughtiness as toward others, but in great humility and meekness.

"Forbearing one another" means exercising self-restraint as to all evil passions toward each other, and doing this *in love.* Laboring with all diligence to maintain the feeling of oneness which is wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost—the feeling that ye are one pre-eminently in mutual love—in the bonds which Christian peace wreathes around kindred souls. It was not the unity that is outward only, in visible organization, however desirable that may be, but the unity of mutually loving hearts.

4. *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

5. One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6. One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

The question whether we are to read, There is one body, or Ye are one body (each of which would yield a good sense), is properly decided by the demands of v. 5, 6, to which we must supply "*There is.*" Therefore, legitimately, we must fill the ellipsis in this way throughout the passage: "There is one body"—the church—and but one; "one Spirit"—the Holy Ghost; and ye are all called in one glorious hope—one and the same to every believing soul.——So, also, there is one Lord Jesus Christ whom all alike obey; one faith in the exercise of which each saved soul must receive him; one baptism with its significance common to all, viz., a solemn pledge and covenant of consecration to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and with a common symbolic significance of moral cleansing, water being ever the scriptural symbol of the Holy Spirit. So also there is one God and Father of all, manifesting himself in the threefold relation of being *over* (above) all as Father; *through* all in his revealing power as Son; and *in* all by his indwelling presence as Spirit. That there is a purposed allusion to the manifestations of God in his Trinity, presented here under these three prepositions ("over;" "through;" "in") is at least probable on two grounds: (*a.*) That such allusions to the Trinity are a habit of Paul's thought (*e. g.*, 1 Cor. 12: 4–6); (*b.*) That we find the conception of a Trinity in this passage: "One Spirit" (v. 4); "one Lord" (v. 5); and "one God the Father" (v. 6).

The bearing of these points upon the duty of Christian fellowship in love is obvious. There can be no clique of Christians,

outside the one church, Christ's body, inspired by some other spirit than the one Holy Ghost; obeying some other Lord than the one Lord Jesus. Such other group or organization of clannish saints, not in sympathy with the one body of Christ's people, is all Utopian—wholly absurd.

7. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

8. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

9. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

10. He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

11. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

The word "but" (Greek "de") opening this sentence, is suggestive of a gentle turn of thought, as if Paul would say: Although in every thing vital we have oneness, yet in certain very minor points we have variety—viz., in the gifts of the Spirit. His gracious endowments are diverse in kind and in measure, and are granted to us variously. Jesus has been pleased to bestow them in this variety, as Paul has said in more detail (1 Cor. 12: 4–11; 2 Rom. 12: 6–8).——In this connection Paul sustains this great fact by appeal (v. 8, 9) to ancient Scripture (viz., Psalm 68: 19)—a passage which alludes, historically, to the victory won and the spoils taken by the conquering hosts of Israel when Rabbah of Ammon fell before them, and the spoils were distributed as rewards to brave officers and men. In these words Paul finds an admirable illustration of the conquering Messiah, victorious over sin and Satan, rising to his own immortal throne in the heavens, and thence distributing these gifts of the Holy Ghost among his people.

Verses 9 and 10 are a brief digression to say that Christ's rising and ascension involve a previous descent into what are called "the lower parts of the earth." In interpreting this phrase, we must choose between (*a*) the grave—Hades—and (*b*) the earth below as contrasted with the heavens above, in which case the passage refers to his incarnation and birth in human flesh. The former is to be preferred specially because there is an obvious antithesis with his rising from the dead as well as his ascension into heaven, but no clear allusion to his human birth.—He who thus *went down* is the same who soon after *went up*, far above all the lower heavens, to the very throne of the universe, to be supreme over all, his dominion actually filling the universe.

The English translation of v. 11 is infelicitous, inasmuch as it so naturally suggests false meanings—either that Christ gave to some churches, apostles; to others, prophets, etc., or that he gave a few apostles and a few prophets—a few but not many.

Whereas the words of Paul mean only that Christ gave these several classes of church officers and teachers, viz., apostles, prophets, evangelists, etc. The connecting words denote *both—and; i. e.*, these; and those; and those.——The prophets here are certainly those of the gospel age—not of ancient Hebrew times—the word not necessarily implying prediction, but often only that they spake under inspiration, to instruct, exhort, etc. Evangelists differed from pastors in the wider, less restricted range of their labors, being a class of itinerant preachers, of grade, however, subordinate to apostles. Paul requested Timothy to do this work at Ephesus (2 Tim. 4: 5); Philip whose name appears among the seven (Acts 6: 3, 5) is called "the evangelist" (Acts 21: 8).——Pastors and teachers are less broadly distinguished from each other than the previously named classes. Probably the lines of distinction between them were not sharply drawn. Some critics suppose that the pastors had more responsibility in the government than the teachers had.

12. For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:

In v. 12 the punctuation with a comma after "saints" assumes three distinct and co-ordinate objects in this verse; whereas the words used by Paul indicate one nearer, but subordinate object, a means for the attainment of the other two—this nearer one, "the perfecting of the saints;" yet this perfecting was for the further purposes of a better gospel ministry, and all, for the edifying of Christ's body, the church.——Then v. 13 defines in more detail the results of this edification of the church, viz., to bring all the membership into the oneness of Christian belief—belief in the one true system of gospel truth; or, what is essentially the same thing in other words, into the full knowledge of the Son of God. Also unto a perfectly developed and mature Christian manhood, quite advanced beyond being babes—even to that adult development for which full supplies of grace from Christ make all needful provision.

14. That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15. But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ:

16. From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

That we be no longer infants or even children in knowledge and Christian stability; storm-driven and tossed about with every gust of wind—the conception being that these doctrinal fancies —errors of opinion—are stiff winds driving the weak mariner as they will; and these put in motion by artful men, in their cunning craft, working toward and unto fatal deception—a fatal misleading of the mind. Paul's words are not precisely "*whereby* they lie in wait," etc., but *working toward* ruinous error. Such are the results of reckless, wayward speculations which really subvert gospel truth.——Over against these misleading errors, allied to falsehood, not to truth, speak ye the truth in love. Strictly Paul's word means—being fully truthful in love. Hold the truth and live out the truth in a life of love, as opposed to the ambition and the cunning craft of men supremely and only selfish. This love ensures a healthful growth which will be of course growth into Christ, *i. e.*, into the knowledge of Christ and into living union with him.

That Christ is the head and his people the other members of the body is a slight modification of the common figure which represents the church as the very body of Christ. Here the head is thought of as the central vital force for the whole body, in closest organic connection, sending its currents of life-power down through nerves and blood, and the whole frame-work of the system. The whole body is knit together and made firm by a wonderful machinery of bones, tendons, nerves, joints, tissues of various sort—all infused with vital force from the head. The result is the perfect growth and development of the body built up (spiritually considered) in Christian love.

17. This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

18. Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

19. Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

With the most solemn emphasis Paul affirms as a witness under oath before a court of justice; and to heighten even this, he affirms it "*in the Lord*"—in his behalf, as one speaking not for man, but for God and for Jesus Christ. Deeply in earnest he implores them to walk no longer as heathen do—which he describes as being "in the vanity of the intelligence"—every-where the Old Testament conception of idolatry—all its notions, vain, empty, void of sense, madly foolish, wickedly over-riding the good sense with which God has endowed the human mind. So Paul in Rom. 1: 21, 22 also Jer. 10: 8. Thus is "their understanding darkened," and they are alienated into dislike and aversion so as really to hate that

pure life which God gives to those who will, by regeneration into moral purity. From such life of God, they become utterly estranged in heart through the working of two causes—their ignorance, and their moral obduracy—the ignorance being occasioned by the obduracy, and this obduracy being intensified by the fearful immorality of their lives—as Paul proceeds to say.—— "Past feeling"—dead to all just moral sensibility; having no sense of the shame, the meanness, or the guilt of such vices—in wantonness they abandon themselves to the working out of all manner of uncleanness, in the spirit which forever cries more, more!——As to the sense of the last word of v. 19, translated "with greediness," there is perhaps a slight question whether to take it in its usual and special sense, *covetousness;* or in its more general sense, *greed*, the spirit which forever craves and demands. The latter seems to me preferable here, since it is not naturally the name of a new form of sin, but of a new element in its nature. ——This view of heathenism as to its mental fatuity; its moral, self-made blindness; and its drift into all vices and crimes—may be compared with Paul's somewhat more extended description in Rom. 1—a mournful showing; but alas! where is it not found true?

20. But ye have not so learned Christ;

21. If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22. That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

23. And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

24. And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

A model of blended force and beauty is this—"Ye have not so learned Christ!" If ye have learned Christ at all, ye have found something utterly unlike this. There is nothing of this sort in Jesus Christ. "If indeed ye have heard *Him* speak." Paul makes the word *Him* emphatic by position; "If *Him* ye have heard." But we need not restrict this hearing to Christ's living voice from his personal presence, but may properly extend it to his voice speaking by his Spirit through human lips, this being for all practical purposes the very voice of Jesus.——Still expanding the thought—"and in him have been taught"—*i. e.*, in unison with him, according to the common usage of the words "*in Christ.*" As the very truth is in respect to Jesus, Paul being very specific and careful that what they accept as gospel truth should be the very truth as to Jesus, in harmony with his real character and especially with his manifestations as *Jesus*—the personal Savior of lost sinners.——Paul then proceeds to give the moral aspects and bearings of this gospel truth (v. 22), viz., that in respect to their entire former life they put off the old man—

the entire old character—every thing that belonged to his spirit, impulses, motives, activities—all of which were morally rotten in fleshly lusts; and put on the new man—a spirit renewed and made godlike in righteousness and real holiness.——The intermediate clause, v. 23 (intermediate between putting off the old and putting on the new), should have special attention. Its exposition turns upon the word "spirit," which may be either the human spirit or the divine. Our authorized version assumes it to refer to the human, but there is strong reason for referring it to the divine—thus: And be renewed (regenerated) by the Spirit of God, whose sphere of action is in the intelligence, working through the truth unto the transformation of the will—the "heart"—into God's moral image. Beyond question, Paul sometimes conceives of the human intelligence * as being renewed by the Holy Ghost (*e. g.*, Rom. 12: 2): "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your *mind*." Moreover, a reference to the Divine Spirit's agency is entirely legitimate here. The omission of it could not be easily accounted for. This construction of v. 23 is held by some of the best modern critics (Ellicott, Meyer, etc.). Col. 3: 10 should be compared: "Put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him."

25. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another.

What does the gospel renewal and the new life of the new man imply? Paul proceeds to answer this great question with some detail. First of all—truthfulness. Let every man speak truth with his neighbor, and let every human being be a neighbor as to this duty—for we are not to think of ourselves as severed from the rest of mankind, with no interest to care for but those of our personal selves. Rather we are members of one another, parts of one whole—the great unit of mankind. It is perhaps possible that Paul's thought is upon the Christian unity of all Christ's people in his one body—the church; but I see no reason to limit the demand for truthfulness to our Christian brethren. All men, and not Christians only, are our neighbors.

26. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:
27. Neither give place to the devil.

Both these verbs are in form imperatives—as our version has them; but the second—"Do not *sin*"—is made specially emphatic by the Greek negative. I assume the sense of the passage to be this: When there is occasion for a just indignation (as there may be and sometimes will be), no law of God forbids your feeling such indignation; yet, Paul would say—My special admonition to you is that ye hold it well under control; let it be transient; shut down sharply upon it, and let not the sun set ere it be brought

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under. Let not the sun go down upon your mind under *irritation*. Let excited feeling cool off lest it ensnare you on into sin. Neither give place to the devil—as you would do if you were to indulge these uprisings of just indignation too far or too long. Satan would seize his opportunity to ensnare you to your hurt.

28. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

The moral system of the gospel works a complete revolution in regard to another vice, theft. Let every man not only cease to steal, but put those same thievish hands of his own (so the improved text) to useful labor upon some good thing, so that he may not only supply his own wants by honest toil, but have somewhat to give to the needy. The transformation from stealing the fruits of other men's toil to working with his own hands not only for an honest living but for benevolent giving as well, is great and blessed—a fine illustration of what the gospel does to regenerate society; to dry the streams of human misery and pour forth new streams of wholesome life.

29. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

The law of Christian morals extends to all spoken words; none can escape this responsibility. The word "corrupt" is transferred in usage from the material world to the spiritual, meaning in the former sphere, rotten, offensive; and in the latter, analogously the same—injurious in its influence, offensive, repulsive to all right moral tastes and perceptions. It stands here in antithesis to that which is good for useful edifying and which would minister pleasure and profit to the hearer. Perhaps "grace" should not be closely restricted to its highest Christian sense; for in its general sense of favor, good, happiness, it yields a very pertinent meaning in this connection. The doctrine is—Let your words conduce to the happiness of others. For this noble end is speech given. Therefore let no bad words escape your lips; but if there be any word good for edification in some useful line, that is the word to speak; fail not to speak it. "A word spoken in due season, how good it is!" (Prov. 15: 23). "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. 25: 11).

30. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

"Grieve not the Holy Spirit"—for He loves you and rejoices in your purity inasmuch as your heart is the temple of his abode, and He must therefore be grieved by your bad words or bad temper.——Note the heightened force which comes from the very names—"the *Holy* Spirit"—the Spirit *of God;*"—such a spirit

must be not only offended but deeply grieved by words or by deeds uncongenial to his purity, his tenderness, his benevolence.

The more should we feel the force of this admonition because it is the office of this Spirit to "seal you to the day of redemption." This ensealing by the Spirit is particularly defined in Eph. 1 : 13, 14 and 2 Cor. 1 : 22; but especially in Rom. 8 : 16. These passages show that this sealing is the mark put upon (or better *within*) the Christian heart—not that God may be able to recognize us, but that we may be able to recognize ourselves as his children and know our title to our inheritance from God. To grieve the Spirit, therefore, might obscure this title, and bring darkness, not to say, leanness upon our own souls. The tokens of his ensealing will become dim, or, as the case may be, quite effaced.

31. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:
32. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

The things named in v. 31 will offend and grieve the Spirit of God; the qualities of character put in v. 32 will be congenial to his presence. We can not well doubt that they stood thus before Paul, both alike suggested by their relation to the Holy Spirit of God who should find a congenial home in every Christian heart. Hence a freshened interest should attach to this exhortation in both its parts—the points forbidden and the points enjoined. Nor let us ever forget that the true light in which Christians should estimate these bad and these good tempers and deeds is precisely this—their bearing upon the gentle, mild, loving Spirit that would dwell within our hearts if he could!

"Bitterness" is the opposite of love. It describes a certain temper or mood of mind, in contrast with kindness toward each other.——"Wrath" is the effervescence, the boiling up and flowing over of this bitter spirit.——"Anger" suggests a more settled state of malign feeling, a more permanent ill-will. "Clamor" will be its outbreaking expression. "Evil-speaking" (Greek, blasphemy) in this connection should be speaking evil of men—not, as often elsewhere, speaking recklessly or even defiantly of God.——The law of reason and of God in regard to saying any thing ill of fellow-men is—Never except *when* and *as* the greater good requires; never beyond what real good demands. The ill that others do may sometimes be spoken of; but never in the spirit of self-complacency; never from pride, never from ill-will toward the ill-doing party, but only to do them good, or to lessen the harm they are doing to others, or in some manifest way, to subserve a greater good which promises to overbalance the evil naturally incident to such speaking.——"With all malice"—the word malice expressing that deep selfishness which begets hate,

and is the root element out of which all the previously named bad qualities grow.

Next we have the opposite qualities of temper and spirit—the sweet charities of the Christian heart.——"Be ye"—more closely translated, is *become* ye; study and labor to be such—to mold your own spirit into these habitudes of feeling and temper.—— Strive always to be kind one to another, compassionate, forgiving toward yourselves as God manifested in Christ is toward you.— "Forgiving toward yourselves" translates the Greek words.—— "God for Christ's sake" is less accurate than "God *in Christ*"— *i. e.*, God manifested in Christ—as He comes before us revealing himself in Christ his Son. This witnesses wonderfully to God's forgiving love, and so should become an inspiring example to us unto like forgiveness among ourselves. Oh, might we become forgiving, even as God is in Christ! So ready to forgive the penitent—with love equal to the forgiving and blotting out of offenses so vile, so flagrant, so abusive!

CHAPTER V.

Practical duties to be done, and sins to be shunned fill out this chapter.——Be imitators of God especially in the point of love (v. 1, 2); putting away all forms of uncleanness in life and abuse of the tongue (v. 3, 4); for men guilty of such sins can not enter heaven but must abide under God's displeasure (v. 5, 6); let them walk in their new light, manifesting the fruits of the Spirit (v. 7–10); severing all fellowship with works of darkness and shame, and walking in light (v. 11–14); walking also in wisdom according to God's will (v. 15–17)—not filled with wine but with the Spirit, and expressing their deep emotions in Christian song and thanksgiving (v. 18–20). The great duty of submission to each other according to the demands of their respective social relations (v. 21); submission of wives to husbands (v. 22–24); love of husbands to their wives enjoined and illustrated (v. 25–33).

1. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;
2. And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.

Become ye, therefore, imitators of God as children beloved— *i. e.*, of him, and let this love which he bears to you be an inspiration toward cultivating his loving spirit.——The word Paul used for "children" suggests children *by birth* with reference, we may suppose, to the new birth by the Spirit.——"And walk in love," manifesting it in your every-day life, even as Christ

loved us, with love so pure that he gave himself to God an offering and sacrifice in our behalf—of fragrant odor, pleasing to God. "*Loved*" and "*gave*" are better as more exactly translating the tense Paul used, than "*hath* loved" and "*hath* given," since the latter might imply that it *was* but is now wholly past. This sacrifice, being for us, was vicarious, and being made to God, was sacrificial and expiatory. That it was sweet and fragrant to God may indicate both his delight in the self-sacrificing spirit which it manifested, and his satisfaction, governmentally considered, in its results as sustaining the honor of his law and throne.

3. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

4. Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

We must note Paul's stern, unqualified, oft-repeated condemnation of the sin of fornication—which apparently was accounted no sin at Ephesus, under the debasing influences of its Diana-worship.

Let all sexual impurity of whatever name or degree be put away from you and not even named—not even talked of—much less permitted and indulged—for in this thing entire purity in deed and even in speech befits the holy—the real saints of God.——That "covetousness" should be placed in such connection—a sin so unlike the others specified, is remarkable, and perhaps should suggest its omnipresent power in corrupt heathen society. It stands in similar connection in v. 5, below. It is remarkable that the two great mobs which proved so serious to Paul—that at Philippi and that at Ephesus—were due immediately and directly to this spirit of covetousness;—in the former "when they saw that the hope of their gains was gone" (Acts 16: 19); in the latter, the war-cry of Demetrius was—"Ye know that by this craft we have our wealth" (Acts 19: 23–27.) This may explain why Paul had so keen a sense of the power of covetousness, and why no enumeration of the great forces hostile to Christianity could be complete without it.——As to the precise idea of the word "filthiness," the question is whether of deed or of word. The following context favors the latter; perhaps, the foregoing context, the former. The fundamental idea is of something indecorous, foul.——Of "foolish talking," Trench says that "to the sense of idle, aimless, senseless talk, must be added that sin and vanity of spirit which the talk of fools is certain to betray."——The Greek word for "jesting" by its etymology suggests a happy turn of thought, with agreeable associations. But usage gives it the bad sense, suggestive of foolish things, and here apparently of things foul, unbecoming—thoughts at once frivolous and indecent. Paul says of such jesting and foolish talking—"which are not *convenient:*" but certainly he did not mean that such talk does not come flippantly enough to the tongue of the foul-minded:—that to such it is not "convenient," but hard, labori-

ous. This is not at all his meaning. He only declares it to be *unsuitable*, unbecoming, out of character for Christians, or indeed for any pure-minded people. "Giving of thanks," so well befitting every human tongue, is infinitely better.

5. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

7. Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

The best authorities make this verb "know" (first clause)—not indicative but imperative—not stating that they *do* know, but exhorting them to know and to take it deeply to their heart. Know ye this as a great fact, too momentous to be ignored or to be at all out of mind. The Greek idiom puts this fact strongly—thus:—As to every fornicator, or unclean one or covetous—not a man of them can have inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. The covetous man is declared to be in heart an idolater. His heart goes to his money as the idolater's to his idol.——This kingdom belongs to both Christ and God; is spoken of interchangeably—sometimes as the kingdom of Christ; again, as the kingdom of God. The passage can not therefore be taken as a direct proof-text affirming that Christ is God. It bears on the divine nature of Christ by implying that he must be worthy—even as God himself is, of the supreme control of the universe. If the kingdom belongs in a similar sense to each, then they must be essentially equal as to divine nature.——"Let no man deceive you with false words," into the denial or disbelief of what I have here said (as to the doom of the wicked) for it is undeniably true that because of such sins, the wrath of God is upon all the disobedient. This doctrine is affirmed most emphatically (Gal. 5: 10–21 and Rev. 21: 8, 27 and 22: 15). Expose not yourselves to God's wrath by indulging in sins which must surely bring it down upon you.

8. For ye were sometime darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light;

9. (For the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

10. Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

In your Pagan life ye were dark-minded; now ye are enlightened, being "*in the Lord*"—which implies being taught of him and obeying him as your Lord. Therefore walk as sons of light, which is explained (v. 9) by reference to the "fruits of the Spirit." This is legitimate because the sons of light are taught and led by the Spirit. These fruits of the Spirit include whatever is

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good, just, true.——Do all this, "proving"—*i. e.*, evincing and verifying in your own experience all that is well pleasing to the Lord. Develop it in your life. This will be walking as sons of light, led by the Spirit of God.

Throughout this entire passage (v. 8–14), the word "light" is transferred from the material to the spiritual world, and with great pertinence and beauty. The light of the sun—free, pure, joyous; fit helper to all useful labor; welcome revealer of beauty; —who does not love it? Who can not see how aptly it represents the pure, genial, loving spirit which Christ breathes into new-born souls, and the sweetness and purity of the new life which is according to godliness?

11. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them.*

12. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

Have nothing in common with those works or with those who do them. Never cast in your lot with them; seek no share in their so-called pleasures; keep aloof from their society; stand afar from their final doom. Their works are altogether unfruitful of good. Rebuke them, not only by your pure life but with words firm and outspoken. The Greek term seems to contemplate spoken words. Compare 1 Cor. 14: 24, 2 Tim. 4: 2, Tit. 1: 9, 13 and 2: 15.——Their secret vices it would be shameful even to speak of;—how much more shameful is the doing!

13. But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

14. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

As to the last clause of v. 13, "Whatever doth make manifest is light"—if Paul's Greek would justify this English, it would be plain enough; indeed almost too plain to need affirmation. But the Greek word translated—"doth make manifest" is not transitive but passive, and therefore must mean what *is made manifest.* What Paul said therefore is this: All things (sins), rebuked, are made manifest by the light thus thrown upon them; and whatever is thus made manifest (set forth in its true moral nature) comes to have itself the nature of light and thus serves to expose the real nature of other sin. Every sin, properly rebuked and shown to be what it is, becomes itself a witness against other sin—much the same as more light would be. Rebuked sin becomes itself a sort of light to rebuke yet other sin.——This is good sense, and should encourage Christians in rebuking sin—which was Paul's object here.

The Scripture referred to in v. 14 (supposably Isa. 60: 1) sustains this interpretation: "Arise; shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Let Zion arise

and make that light shine by reflection from herself which God's glorious Sun of righteousness is pouring upon her. Let her be as the moon in the point of reflecting the sunlight.

15. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

16. Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord *is*.

Let your life be ordered with care, precision; and not left to run at random as by its own thoughtless will. Have definite objects always in view, and never be regardless of your responsibilities.—So wise men do, but not so fools. Redeeming choice opportunities (the favoring times)—buying them up as the tradesman looks for good bargains; and the more so because the times are bad; iniquity abounds. For this reason should ye be the more careful to learn the will of the Lord, and let it govern your life.

18. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

19. Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

20. Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

21. Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

Here are various admonitions and duties; *e. g.*, against becoming drunk with wine—*filled* with it; for this is not precisely "excess," but *dissoluteness*. It robs a man of all proper self-control; takes away his reason; makes him a sot, a beast. This should be reason enough why a real *man* should never fill himself with wine. But be ye filled with a spirit far other than that of wine, even with the Spirit of God, whose inspirations are altogether pure, wholesome, precious, blessed. The contrast between filled with wine and being filled with the Spirit is immense. Paul had marvelous skill in putting his points in their utmost strength.

Being filled with the Spirit is here supposed to produce a certain elation, exaltation of soul, somewhat analogous to the excitement of wine, yet wholly pure and noble. This may properly find expression and manifest itself in reciting among yourselves psalms, hymns, spiritual songs; in singing and making heart-melody to the Lord; in giving thanks to God even the Father in the name of Christ, and in submitting one to another in his fear. This last (v. 21) stands grammatically in the same relation as the other preceding points, although it seems by no means analogous.

"Speaking to one another in Psalms," seems to imply that such

reading or reciting was a customary form of instruction in social worship, as is suggested also in 1 Cor. 14: 26: "When ye come together, every one has a psalm," etc. Whoever "had a word of exhortation" was invited to "say on," and it might be in the sacred words of Scripture, or in words of sacred song. The lines of distinction, if any, between "psalms," "hymns," and "spiritual songs" are not fully defined on any reliable authority.—The word for "making melody" means primarily striking the lyre, but naturally came to have the more general sense of making music; here, the melody of real heart-worship—true adoration and praise. Song is peculiarly appropriate to thanksgiving, for which we have occasion all our days.

Mutual submission to each other, according to our various relations, opens here a new subject, presenting new duties.

22. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

23. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the Savior of the body.

24. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing.

Fortunately for the interests of human society, the important points in this scriptural doctrine as to the relation of husband and wife are made very clear and are illustrated admirably. There can be no doubt that this doctrine is the subjection of wives to husbands as the higher authority—a subjection under which all is right if wives (as Peter has it, 1 Eps. 3: 6) "do well, and are not afraid with any amazement." The duties involved in this subjection they are to perform as unto the Lord, under the conviction that the Lord himself requires this, and will accept it as rendered to himself. The husband is declared to be the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, and his headship is to be exercised evermore and altogether in love, even as Christ also has loved the church and sustains his supremacy in no other spirit than that of pure and perfect love.

This illustration is in every point of view admirable. When once we fully appreciate the love of Christ for his people—the very love (as the Scriptures often present it) of the bridegroom for his bride—and thoroughly accept this as the model of the husband's love for his wife and his guide and regulator in the exercise of authority and headship over her, their mutual relations will be adjusted perfectly and the currents of domestic life will run smoothly, to their own mutual happiness, and to the well ordering of their household.

It is difficult to determine the precise sense and bearing of the words (v. 23): "Himself is Savior of the body." It would seem that here the word "body" should be the human body proper and not Christ's spiritual body, the church. If so, the reference may be to Christ's saving not the soul only but the body also from hell (Mat. 10: 28), including the resurrection of the body

unto future immortality. In these respects Christ is more to his people than the husband can be to the wife. Yet these higher prerogatives and greater blessings fall under the same law, administered evermore with ineffable love. As subjection to such a head should be rendered cheerfully, gratefully, by all Christ's people, so should wives accept their responsibilities toward their husbands in all things.

25. Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26. That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

The love of Jesus for his church, at once the motive and the measure and model of the husband's love for his wife, is the precious doctrine of our Scripture. The briefest allusion to Christ's love for his church, interpreting and enforcing this law upon the husband, should have been all-powerful; how much more this wonderful exposition of that love! Study it with care. What has it wrought? What objects has it sought and committed itself to secure?—In the exercise of that love for his church, Christ gave himself for her that he might set her apart for himself in holiness, having cleansed her with the washing of water by (in connection with) the word, that he might present her to himself all glorious "within" (Psalm 45: 13), having no spot, no wrinkle, nor any such thing, but that she might be holy and unblemished. So has his love moved him to prepare his bride for the purity and blessedness of his heavenly home. In every stage of progress in this cleansing and adornment, how profound has been his interest; how wise his agencies; how full of love and sympathy his watchful heart; and how sublime will be his joy in the final consummation—a glorious church, of stainless purity, of ineffable beauty and glory—all due to the love of her great Redeemer!—Let us not omit to note the ravishing view of this adornment of his bride which the revelator John has put (Rev. 19: 7, 8): "The marriage of the Lamb has come, and his wife hath made herself ready; and to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

"The washing of water" (v. 26) is probably an allusion to baptism in its symbolic significance of spiritual purification (as in Ezekiel 36: 25–27): "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean," etc.—The agency of "the word" in this moral cleansing is entirely in place, Christ himself having taught this plainly: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth" (John 17: 17). "When he, the Spirit of truth, shall come, he will guide you into all truth. He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you" (John 16: 13, 14).

28. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

29. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30. For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

Here is yet another measure for this required love, combining in itself a motive as well: "So ought husbands to love their own wives even as (they do) their own bodies." The true text requires us to read "*their own*" before "wives" as well as before "bodies," the implication being that the wife is his own as his body is his own; entitled therefore to the same tender care and the same manifestations of love. Indeed this is the precise point of the passage. His wife is a second self. So much the marriage institution assumes and enjoins.——There is perhaps a tacit allusion to the royal law—"Love thy neighbor as thyself," this being put in terms analogous to that. But the original creation of Eve and the institution of marriage in Eden, mainly lead the thought here——As no man in his senses ever hates his own flesh, but always feeds, nurtures, and protects it, even as *Christ* (the better text) does his church; so should the husband never hate or abuse, but only love and cherish, his wife.

So Christ loves and tenderly cares for his church, "for we are members of his body."——In this v. 30 the textual authorities differ, some giving only the first clause, and omitting "of his flesh and of his bones." If this be the whole of the text, we may assume an allusion to Paul's figure of the church as the mystical body of Christ.

But if we include in the text, "of his flesh and of his bones," we may suppose an allusion to Gen. 2: 23: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." It favors this latter allusion that Paul proceeds to quote from that context (Gen. 2: 24); while it bears against it that v. 30 refers not to the relation of husband and wife, but to that between Christ and his church.

The last clause of v. 30, Tischendorf (with S. V. A.) rejects; while Howson, Ellicott, and others accept.

32. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

33. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife *see* that she reverence *her* husband.

The question—*What* is "a great mystery?" has been answered variously. That which seems to me the most obvious and on the whole the most probable, I would put thus: Paul's word "*this*"

refers to the very point last spoken of—the mysterious, almost miraculous creation of woman, and the consequent wonderful union of husband and wife. Here Paul somewhat abruptly cuts short this discussion, only adding—But I am speaking specially in respect to Christ and the church, and I wish you to think of this as the main thing now under consideration—the mystery of this being even greater than that which relates to woman and marriage.

Then to close this theme, summing up its great practical points, he adds—But as to yourselves individually and severally—Let every one so love his own wife as himself; and let the wife have a care that she reverence her husband. These are the staple points in their relative duties to each other.

CHAPTER VI.

The relative duties of children to parents (v. 1–3); of fathers to children (v. 4); of servants to their masters (v. 5–8); and of masters (v. 9): a general exhortation to put on the whole panoply of God, all the Christian armor, to withstand the devil and all his allied spirits of darkness (v. 10–12); this armor briefly specified—the girdle of truth; the breastplate of righteousness; for the feet the sandals of the gospel of peace (v. 13–15); over all the shield of faith; the helmet of salvation; the sword of the Spirit (v. 16, 17); persevering with all prayer in the Spirit in behalf of all the saints and of me (Paul) especially (v. 18–20). He will send Tychicus to give them all the information as to himself they might desire (v. 21, 22); his closing benediction (v. 23, 24).

1. Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.
2. Honor thy father and mother; which is the[2] first commandment with promise;
3. That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

The Greek word for "children"* suggests offspring, and also, the tenderly beloved ones.——"In the Lord" should be connected with children, not with parents—the duty not being by any means restricted to those parents who are "in the Lord." Coming in its sense after children it requires them to obey their

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parents as a duty enjoined by the Lord—and a duty for all who would be *in the Lord* in the sense of having his favor.——Of course to obey parents as a duty due to the Lord would forbid obedience to parental commands which are positively wicked, for the Lord's authority is higher than theirs, and God must so regard it. But Paul would not suggest that such requirements are to be expected, and therefore refrains from making this exception. Indeed, he wrote to the Colossians (3: 30):—"Children, obey your parents *in all things;* for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."——Here, "for this is *right*"—just; in harmony with the principles of intrinsic righteousness.

"Honor thy father and thy mother" with all filial respect and reverence; not the fathers only but the mothers also;—for Christianity has a far higher and nobler ideal of woman's social position than heathenism ever had. ——This is the first commandment in their order in the decalogue, which has a promise of earthly good appended. So reads the fifth commandment: "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Apparently, Paul's thought was also upon Deut. 5: 16—"That thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Yet he wisely omits the allusion to the land of Canaan—this part of the promise, though pertinent in Moses' time, had no pertinence to Gentiles in Paul's day.

4. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

It is sadly deep in human nature to abuse power. Against such abuse Paul assumes that fathers (even more than mothers) need to be admonished here against provoking their children to wrath—resentment—the feeling that they are abused and wronged. To the Colossians he puts this point thus (3: 21): "Provoke not your children to anger lest they be discouraged" —lose heart and hope.——Moreover, Paul wisely suggests duties to be done, as well as abuses to be shunned. Of the words, "nurture and admonition," the former has the broader range, including all that comes under the head of *training*—the influence of rewards and punishments; example, practice; while the latter rather suggests instruction by word—things put into the mind. Both are to be "of the Lord" in the sense of being such as he can approve.

5. Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

6. Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

7. With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:

8. Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free.

In this extended passage beginning 5: 21 and ending 6: 9—which might fitly have been made one chapter on *submission one to another in the fear of God*, it was appropriate that in each special relation Paul should speak first of the *inferior* party, explaining their duties of submission; and next of the party in authority, with cautions against abusing their power. Thus he addresses first wives; then husbands; first children; then parents; first servants; then their masters.

"Ye masters according to the flesh"—for he speaks not of their one Heavenly Master, but of their earthly.

Paul says, "Be obedient *with fear and trembling*:" yet we may be in danger of putting more into these words than Paul himself was wont to do. It is well to interpret them by his own frequent usage; —*e. g.*, to the Corinthians (1 Eps. 2: 3)—"I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling"—yet this was not the spirit of a crouching slave, quaking in fear of the lash. He even uses the same words of the Corinthians (2 Eps. 7: 15) as receiving Titus "with fear and trembling"—which moved the inward affection of that good man, and therefore, we must presume, was not a servile or cringing "fear and trembling." And yet again; Paul exhorts that ye "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2: 12). These cases of Paul's usage should modify the otherwise stern aspects of this injunction.

Whatever Paul's view might be of the intrinsic rightness of this form of slavery, it is plain that he counseled submission rather than forcible resistance; and moreover, submission as being under the circumstances a duty due to Christ, and honorable to their Christian profession. This does not necessarily imply that Paul approved of the system, or held that God approved it. But to servants he would say: Since ye are in this subject relation, under a power ye can not wisely resist, perform its service as unto God and ye shall not lose your reward. Seek supremely to please God, doing all the good ye can, and He will requite your service as done to himself.

9. And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

Ye masters also have duties and responsibilities, little as ye may think of them and lay them to heart.—"Forbearing to threaten"—which means much more than forbearing to *punish*—more than refraining from the lash—the torture. If Paul thought

that even threatening was in their case wrong, how much more wrong must be the infliction of what passionate masters might threaten!——Moreover, Paul said—Desist from *the* threatening—that very kind and degree of it to which ye are so often tempted, and perhaps, so much accustomed.——The best textual authorities have it—"Knowing that *their* and *your* master (both theirs and yours) is in heaven, and has not the least partiality for master more than for slave."—Such suggestions must always be wholesome, even as they are forever *just*, and in harmony with the rule of the all-righteous and all-merciful God.

10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.

This passage conceives of the Ephesian church as thoroughly "militant"—in a state of warfare, having enemies many and mighty, and therefore needing to be equipped thoroughly for either attack or defense, with armor both offensive and defensive. Noticeably, the style of these weapons is Roman rather than Jewish, as it should be, according to the then existing tactics of war.—Moreover, it need not surprise us that Paul should think of his Ephesian church as in for bloody fight, for had he not been there himself? Had he not seen and felt the terrible reality? It seemed to him like fighting with beasts on the terrible arena of the Roman amphitheater (1 Cor. 15: 32). He remembered that roaring, surging mob where for two mortal hours the gathered thousands rent the air with their frenzied cry—"Great is Diana of the Ephesians" (Acts 19: 34), and himself, bold man as he was, withdrew from the city rather than breast this wild storm of human (or Satanic) madness. The elements for another such mob were still there Paul very well knew, at the time of this writing; and who could tell how soon they might gather into another storm? Therefore, this letter being near its close, this militant counsel must not be omitted. Any one can see its special adaptation to Ephesus.

"Be strong"—should rather have been *Be ye strengthened*—made strong—the verb being in the passive voice. See that ye gather new strength *in the Lord* as the only source and fountain of Christian power.——A "whole armor"—panoply—including protection for every part of the person and all the weapons of assault known to the military science of the age—all these provided of God for your use—put ye on.——"That ye may be able to *stand;*" not merely in an upright posture, for "stand" is here a military term, and means much more than being erect as opposed to sitting. To *stand* in the war sense, is to hold your ground, firm, undaunted, unyielding.

Observe, moreover; it is against no merely human foe, but against the devil; and the devil not always in open, honorable warfare; but in all his "wiles;" for herein will often lie his great strength and your chief danger.——"For we wrestle not against *flesh and blood*"—mere mortal men, and men considered as frail, and indeed feeble, compared with spiritual foes whose energy never wanes. "Principalities and powers"—the same words which Paul used above (1: 21) for holy beings of most exalted rank—represent here fallen angels of equally great power, but of malign spirit—associates of Satan in his antagonism against God and God's people. They are said here to be "the *world-rulers of this* darkness"—having control of the elements of darkness and sin. The next clause might be translated—against the *spiritualities of wickedness;* but the term "spiritualities" probably means, in the concrete, hosts of spiritual beings; vast bodies of fallen spirits. "In the heavenly regions," where Paul locates their present abode (2: 2)—a realm of space below the real heaven, yet above the earth.——The word "wrestle" where we should expect a military term, is specially suggestive, looking to personal conflict—a hand to hand contest—man against man—in which every combatant must test his powers to their utmost. Such is the Christian warfare.

13. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

15. And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

17. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

"In the evil day"—viz., that of conflict, struggle. "Standing" is, of course, in the strong military sense.

In making out an exposition of this Christian armor, it is better to be content with general analogies on a basis of common sense than to seek very minute applications under the guide of mere fancy. This general sense is thoroughly instructive; but pushed into the realms of fancy it yields results amusing perhaps, yet little useful.

The girdle about the loins gathered and held closely the loose oriental dress, and thus left the limbs free for action. To this service Paul assigns "truth"—not in the sense of truthfulness in character, good though this is; but in the sense of gospel *truth* as opposed to error; the knowledge of its great facts and principles.

The "breastplate" is righteousness. Apparently Paul follows Isa. 59: 17: "For he (the Lord) put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head."

To the Thessalonians (1 Eps. 5: 8) Paul slightly changes the figure:—"Putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation;" which shows that general rather than very specific analogies answered his purpose and met his views.——"Righteousness" may well be taken in the sense of Christian moral rectitude—that righteousness which belongs to the "new man in Christ Jesus." The shoes or sandals for the feet (v. 15) are less clearly defined. The literal translation would be—"the preparedness of the gospel of grace"—which would seem to mean—having your feet ever ready to go forth bearing the gospel message. Let not your fight against the devil detain you a moment from preaching the gospel. In fact, this is your true war policy, to carry the fight into Satan's kingdom. Never be content to stand on the defensive. Keep your feet shod and be ready for your "marching orders."

In v. 16, not "above all" in the sense of more important than all the rest; but *over* all the rest—outside of them, or perhaps, in addition to all. The Roman shield was a huge thing, in the shape of a door, from which its ancient name is taken; often six feet long—wide as well as long enough to protect the whole person. It was attached to the left arm, thus leaving the right free for use in blows or in hurling missile weapons. Upon this shield the agile soldier was to catch the fire-tipt darts. This office in the Christian's armor, his faith must perform.——Receive (from Him who can supply it) the helmet, viz., salvation—the assured hope of it in the future world, and to some extent the realization of it in the present. The sword, furnished to our hand by the Spirit of God, is his word of truth. The writer to the Hebrews has the same figure (4: 12); "the word of God, sharper than any double-edged sword," etc.

18. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

19. And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

20. For which I am an embassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Bunyan carries out the war imagery so as to include as the best of these death-weapons this "all-prayer." Paul means that ye pray with every form of prayer and supplication—your heart in warm fellowship with the Spirit of God, ever seeking his inspiration and guidance, whose help is ever needed and never withheld from the humble, believing suppliant. Watch unto such prayer and persevere in it in behalf of all your fellow-soldiers, and not least, for *me*—that I may be fearless and may have scope

for a bold utterance of my message, making known the long unknown gospel. For preaching this gospel to Gentiles he was then an embassador for Christ in chains at Rome. In answer to these prayers he hoped to be soon released so that he might resume his gospel work without hindrance or fear.

21. But that ye also may know my affairs, *and* how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things;

22. Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and *that* he might comfort your hearts.

This letter he sends by Tychicus who can give them all the information as to his state which they might desire.

This sending by a personal friend made it unnecessary to write in detail of himself, or to send individual salutations.——"That ye also" (v. 21) as well as others, implied that he would carry this epistle to other churches for their public reading. Col. 4: 7 shows that Tychicus was to visit the Colossians also, and personally report Paul's circumstances to them as well. "All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you." This brother beloved is named elsewhere—Acts 20: 4 and 2 Tim. 4: 12 and Tit. 3: 12.

23. Peace *be* to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

24. Grace *be* with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

This benediction, always in order because always the fit utterance of the apostle's great and loving heart, has this peculiarity:—Grace for those who love the Lord Jesus "*in sincerity*"—the Greek word strictly meaning incorruption—with a love and a spirit that knows no decline, no decay; that will be immutable; forever fresh and evermore enduring.

EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

INTRODUCTION.

It was in the midst of Paul's second missionary tour that, having traversed Phrygia and Galatia, he was admonished that his inner Guide did not accept his thought of traversing the more northern and western provinces of Asia Minor. Under this suspense his party had reached the port of Troas when a night-vision brought to him a special summons—(was it an angel's voice?)—"Come over into Macedonia, and help us." They heard it as from the Lord, and passing the Hellespont, bore the gospel into what was to them the Great Continent of the West. Hitherto, the regions skirting the eastern shore of the Mediterranean had been the theater of apostolic travel and labor. Now, Macedonia, Greece, Italy, and Rome lay before them. It was a great step in advance toward "going into all the world and preaching the gospel to every creature."

From Neapolis, the port on the western shore, a journey inland of nine miles brought them to Philippi—"the chief city in that part of Macedonia, and a colony" (Acts 16: 12). This important city, built by Philip of Macedon and named for him, became celebrated as the place of the decisive battle which (B. C. 42) crushed the party of Brutus and Cassius, and gave the undisputed scepter of Rome to Augustus and Anthony. Subsequently when Augustus rewarded his veterans with the finest lands and cities of Italy, he colonized some of the dispossessed Roman citizens in this city, Philippi, thus making it a Roman colony, and many of its people Roman citizens. With his usual historic accuracy Luke not only tells us this was "a colony" (16: 12), and represents the men who arrested Paul and Silas as calling themselves "Romans" (v. 21), but he gives the rulers of the city the Roman title (Archons, v. 19) and the magistrates yet another Roman title, occurring elsewhere but rarely in his history (strategoi). The tact and manly independence shown by Paul in asserting his rights as a Ro-

man citizen, and the consternation of the magistrates when they learned this fact (v. 37, 38) have their explanation in the estimate of Roman citizenship, prevalent in this colonial city. Here then more directly than ever before the gospel came into contact with Roman civilization.

Of the labors and experiences of Paul and Silas in this city, Luke (Acts 16: 12–40) has given some of the salient points. Here they found a group of devout people who were accustomed on the Sabbath to go outside the city walls to a place of prayer by the side of the river Strymon. Thither went they also, and sat down there and spake to the company, chiefly if not exclusively women "who resorted thither." In that group was a woman of some note by the name of Lydia, of Thyatira (Asia Minor), a dealer in purple cloths—probably from her native city. Her heart the Lord opened to attend to Paul's words. In the result, she shortly opened her house and home in Christian hospitality and welcome to these stranger missionaries.

Here occurred another special experience. A certain damsel, having the spirit of divination—a demoniac of the general character of those whom Jesus so often encountered, but having as her specialty the gift (or pretense) of divining and telling men's fortunes—was led, apparently by this malign spirit, to follow Paul and Silas, day after day, proclaiming—"These men are the servants of the Most High God, and are showing us the way of salvation." Such help to his cause was not at all to Paul's mind. Harassed and grieved by the annoyance and scandal which demoniac testimony might bring upon their cause, he turned and said to the spirit (not to the damsel, but to the demon spirit)—"I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her:" and he came out. The sequel of this exorcism was a furious persecution, a cruel scourging, and a close, severe imprisonment. The result of these scenes in the prison added yet another valuable accession to the group of believers—the Roman jailer and his household. Paul and Silas having been very politely and urgently requested to leave the city, at length, though very deliberately and in a dignified manner, consented to do so and passed on. But the gospel was effectually planted in that city.

These events may be dated proximately in A. D. 51, not long after the great council at Jerusalem (Acts 15):——If we may rely upon the accuracy of Luke's narrative in his varying use, now of the first person ("we"), and now of the

third ("they"), to determine his presence or absence, he was with Paul at Philippi, but was not with him when he and his party left the city and passed on to other cities of Macedonia and Greece. Indeed, Luke appears next in the company of Paul (Acts 20: 5) when "*we* sailed away from Philippi." It is therefore supposable, and indeed, highly probable, that Luke spent most or all of the intervening seven years at or near Philippi preaching the gospel and ministering to that church—which labors may account for the remarkably wholesome tone of the Christian life in this church—a tone which is apparent throughout this epistle.

That this epistle is *genuine, i. e.*, written by Paul and to this very church at Philippi, not even the most skeptical of critics have found any plausible reason to doubt. Truly the signs of an epistle of Paul are all here—in the introduction; in the personal allusions; in the outbreathings of a great and loving soul, and in the concluding salutations.

Nor is there room for difference of opinion as to the *date of its writing*—near the close of his two years' confinement at Rome—*i. e.*, A. D. 62. He was then still enduring this confinement (1: 12–14), but hoping to be released soon (2: 24).

As to the *occasion* of the epistle: It was *not* some sad defection—nascent or developed, calling for sharp rebuke or earnest argument, as in the case of the Galatian churches; it was not some flagrant immoralities, such as appeared in Corinth, calling for his prompt and vigorous hand of excision. But apparently, the occasion was not single but manifold, including the gratitude he felt and wished to express for their manifested love and sympathy and for their supplies of his personal wants;—the love of his heart for a people so loving and so lovely; his joy in every remembrance of them in his daily prayers in their behalf; the comfort he felt as his thought rested upon this one church which had caused him apparently no pain but only pleasure, and in which, unlike every other, he saw nothing to rebuke but much to commend.——It should, however, be observed that his Philippian flock was suffering a measure of persecution (1: 29, 30), and that there was occasion for exhorting them to moderation, gentleness, humility, and great self-abnegation (2: 2–5), and not least, to unity of Christian feeling, and against admitting to their confidence the Jewish and Judaizing bigots of that age (3: 2–7).

The points of special interest and value to us in this

epistle are manifold, and are also very obvious.——It is refreshing to have such a manifestation of the great wealth of Christian love in this apostle's heart. It is at least a pleasure if not a profit to see that God's kind hand toward him gave him one such oasis as this in his troubled, anxious, toilsome life—one church to which his mind could revert with apparently no sad associations or reminiscences; one church that had remembered his personal necessities and ministered to their supply; and withal, in such a spirit that Paul could feel free and happy to receive them.

It is also profitable to study such an epistle for the sake of marking the nature of the counsels he gave them; the attainments to which he exhorts them; the really "higher life" as it lay before the mind of the great apostle, and the higher duties to which Paul directs the energies of this best and most hopeful—perhaps most advanced—church ever gathered under his labors. If we may assume that this was, all in all, the best of Paul's missionary churches, and that this group of converts were appreciative, receptive, responsive above any other in his world-wide field of knowledge and care, then surely the study of his words to them ought to be pre-eminently instructive to us as bearing upon the really higher walks of the earthly Christian life.

EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

CHAPTER I.

THE scope of this chapter is the breathing forth of the apostle's deep love for the church at Philippi, and of his unceasing prayers in their behalf (v. 1–11), with some allusion to his imprisonment at Rome and its results there (v. 12–14), and to divers sorts of professedly Christian work then in progress there (v. 15–18); to his own thoughts in view of living or not living, being himself in a strait between the two (v. 19–24); his dominant expectation as to his immediate future (v. 25, 26); concluding with exhortations to an earnest, fearless Christian life (v. 27–30).

1. Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

2. Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

A good reason for Timothy's name here lies in the fact that at this writing he was with Paul at Rome; had been with him in his labors at Philippi; felt personally the deepest interest in the church at Philippi, to which Paul bears a very remarkable testimony in this letter (2: 19–23).——We may notice that Timothy's name appears in the same connection as uniting with Paul in his letter to Colosse; in his second to Corinth; and both his name and that of Silas [Silvanus] in the two letters to Thessalonica. To the Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, and in all the pastoral epistles, Paul prefixes his own name only.——Moreover, it may be noticed that Paul wrote *as an apostle* in every epistle except this to Philippi, those to Thessalonica, and that to Philemon. In these there was no occasion even to allude to his apostolic authority and relations. In this, he is "the servant of Jesus Christ;"—to Philemon, "the prisoner;" while to the Thessalonians he attaches no descriptive epithet to his name.

Paul writes to all the saints, but specifies in particular "the bishops and deacons"—a fact which sufficiently indicates that these and these only were the normal officers of the church—so many orders and no more. Probably the reason for referring to them specially was that they had been active and prominent in gathering and forwarding those supplies for his personal wants

in which this church had distinguished itself and for which Paul felt profoundly grateful to them and to God.

The benediction (v. 2) is in Paul's usual form.

3. I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

4. Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

5. For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

In v. 5, the meaning is not that he asks for their fellowship as a blessing which they need yet have not, but rather that he is moved to joyful prayer in their behalf by the fact of their having had such fellowship—such free and full-hearted sympathy in the progress of the gospel from their very conversion to that hour. The reference is specially to their generous contributions to his support while laboring elsewhere in his great mission work, and to the spirit which such benefactions implied. We ought to notice the warm heart of this great apostle, his deep sympathy with his faithful converts, his continual and joyful prayer in their behalf.

6. Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:

7. Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.

I am very sure God has begun his good work in your souls, the proof of it to me being this—that ye are partakers of the same grace which God gave me to suffer unto bonds joyfully for the gospel, and to labor patiently for its defense and confirmation. Confident that God has thus begun his work in you, I know he will perform it—carry it through to its final consummation—at the day of Christ Jesus. His sanctifying work in human hearts, he never leaves unfinished!

The question has been raised whether this "good work begun" had any special reference to their benefactions—their spirit of active sympathy and help in Paul's missionary work. I would reply: That manifestation of Christian spirit and character was very probably prominent in Paul's thought, yet rather as a proof of their real and deep sympathy with Christ than as constituting in itself the whole of their piety. Paul shows in this very connection that he thinks of them as partakers of all the grace which God had given him to labor and to suffer for Christ.

Why does Paul say, "Perform it unto the day of Christ Jesus," instead of saying "unto the day of your death?"—a question particularly interesting as bearing upon another, viz: Did they really look for Christ's second coming before their own death? So some

critics have assumed, but without sufficient ground. For plainly, in Paul's view, death, considered simply *as death*—the dissolution of soul from body—was a small matter. The meeting with Christ, the entering into the joy of his Lord, was the great thing—*so* great that it quite eclipsed the other, and therefore naturally gave name to the great event. They (Paul and his brethren) knew as well as we do that death is the limit of the Christian conflict, the point where his destiny is decided; and they also felt (apparently more than we are wont to do) that death is to every saint *the personal coming* of his Lord to meet him and take his spirit up to its eternal joy in the Lord. "I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also," were words whose significance had become glorious in their thought, and had given coloring to their accustomed mode of speaking of that day. It was this coming of the Lord to their individual souls at their death to take them to himself and to his prepared mansions, that made this dying day "the day of Christ" to their hearts, and in their Christian vocabulary. Note how natural it is for Paul to use this phrase (1 : 10): "That ye may be sincere and without offense *till the day of* Christ:" *i. e.*, through all your life, till your day of death. Also (2 : 16): "That I may rejoice *in the day of Christ* that I have not run in vain."——If there were the least occasion for argument to prove that in our passage (1 : 6) "until the day of Christ" must mean until your day of death, and *not* until the day of Christ's second visible coming to raise the dead, we might say—Look at the sense of this passage, and also at the sense of this phrase in its relations to the context. This "*day*" is a point of time, and is here put as a limit, a terminus, *unto* or *until* which a certain work is to be carried on. This work is the good work of grace, which the Spirit began at their new birth or conversion. *When* does this work reach its consummation? At what point of time does all temptation to sin cease and all danger of failure, all contingency as to the Christian's future come to its end? Is it at his day of death, or is it at the day of Christ's second coming to raise the dead? To say the latter is to assume that the work of sanctification, with all its contingencies, is to pass over into and indeed *through* the intermediate state and not end till Christ's second coming! But this is by no means the doctrine of Scripture. It is not the doctrine of Paul even in this very chapter; for with him, "to depart at death is to be *with Christ*"—a state, compared with the best life on earth, inconceivably "better," and beyond question the real heavenly state. Therefore in Paul's usage, "the day of Christ is the Christian's day of death." Death brings him into the very presence of the glorified Christ.

On this passage, Ellicott remarks: "That Paul in these words assumes the nearness of the coming of the Lord (as Alford supposes) can not be positively asserted. The day of Christ, whether far off or near, is to each individual the decisive day; it is practically coincident with the day of his death, and becomes, when

addressed to the individual, an exaltation and amplification of the term."

8. For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

9. And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and *in* all judgment;

10. That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ;

11. Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

Paul invokes God to witness not to the fact but to the intensity of his love and longing for his Philippian converts; and noticeably, speaks of this love and longing as being—he does not say, in his own bowels, but "in the bowels of Christ Jesus," in whom his very being is so united, and especially his Christian sympathies, that it seemed to him that Christ's own loving heart was beating within his.

It ought to be instructive to us to mark what such a loving heart (so much of Christ's own heart throbbing in it) would pray for in behalf of those he loved so tenderly. Here it is: "That your love may abound to the result of your having more and more knowledge and spiritual perception of truth in every form; that ye may prove and so approve whatever things are truly excellent; that ye may be pure and blameless (causing none to stumble) against the day of Christ. *Against* rather than "*until*" (is the sense of the original), *i. e.*, as preparation for that day rather than as continuing until that day. "Being filled with the fruit" (singular as to number) "of righteousness," which phrase, therefore, looks not so much toward Christian virtues in detail as toward intrinsic righteousness of character and conduct as a whole. This comes through Jesus Christ, and is to the glory and praise of God; "glory" being the inherent majesty of God, and "praise" the glorification of it by the homage of his creatures. All real righteousness of character in our race, being the result of God's interposing, redeeming love, inures of right to his eternal honor and praise. Verily this prayer by the apostle for his Philippian brethren groups the precious, vital things of the Christian life, showing what we may well implore both for ourselves and for our brethren in the Lord.

12. But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things *which happened* unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

13. So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other *places;*

14. And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

Some information which they will rejoice to hear. The things that have befallen me (in my imprisonment here) have served, not to retard the gospel, but to promote its wider diffusion. The fact of my being a prisoner for Christ because I would preach a common gospel to Gentiles as to Jews has become known at the pretorian head-quarters, and perhaps he meant, in the very palace of the Cæsars, as well as extensively elsewhere. Through sympathy with me in my imprisonment the greater part of the brethren (more accurate than "many") have been inspired and encouraged to greater boldness in preaching Christ. Moreover, the words "in the Lord" (v. 14) should be connected with "having confidence," rather than with "brethren." Having confidence in the Lord, inspired by my bonds, they are more abundantly bold to speak the word of God fearlessly. Such an example of heroic suffering for Christ was gloriously inspiring.

15. Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

16. The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

17. But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel.

18. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

The men alluded to here as preaching Christ of envy and strife were probably certain Judaizing teachers, appearing at Rome, as they did also in the region of Galatia, although these may have been less exceptionable than those in Asia. All were envious of Paul's reputation and success; were entirely out of sympathy with him in his doctrine and practice as to Gentile converts; yet whose preaching of Christ was perhaps better than none, so that Paul might reasonably find some satisfaction in it, although done in a spirit thoroughly hostile to himself. It was truly noble in Paul to so far ignore himself if only Christ were preached and some good done thereby. In the case of those who preached Christ the more earnestly out of love to him in his imprisonment, he could rejoice pre-eminently, not merely because of their more pleasant relations to himself, but because of the better quality of their heart and life in every respect, and consequently the better quality of their Christian work.

19. For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

20. According to my earnest expectation and *my* hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as always, *so* now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether *it be* by life, or by death.

What is referred to under the word "this" (v. 19) as a thing to "turn toward his salvation?" The natural antecedent is the same Greek word (v. 18), somewhat obscured in our translation under the word "therein," which is really—"In *this* do I rejoice." The answer then will be—in their preaching of Christ, and perhaps, enlarging the view—in all real preaching of Christ, by whomsoever done. His consciousness of unselfish joy in that particular preaching doubtless contributed to his precious assurance that his personal salvation would be the result—promoted however by their prayer in his behalf, and the answer to it in the more abundant bestowal of the Holy Ghost. He adds—All this is in accordance with what I have most earnestly prayed and longed for, viz., that in nothing shall I be frustrated—put to shame—but that Christ shall be magnified, honored, and glorified in my body—in my earthly life, whether I live yet longer, or die by martyrdom. He had no higher—we may truly say—no *other* ambition than to glorify Christ; and it was of the smallest imaginable consequence to him whether this were accomplished by his living or his dying. This was his sense of what consecration to Christ means. For this he had "all boldness"—no other feeling but boldness.

21. For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain.

22. But if I live in the flesh, this *is* the fruit of my labor: yet what I shall choose I wot not.

23. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

24. Nevertheless to abide in the flesh *is* more needful for you.

If we would ask Paul to explain what he can mean by such words, here it is. "For"—as to me—living is Christ; dying is gain. Living means more service, toilsome, yet sweet and joyous, for Christ—precious to me because done for him I love:—and dying is nothing but "*gain*"—as he will soon show. If the result shall be longer "living in the flesh," as contrasted with living in the heavenly spiritual life above, and this living in the flesh carries with it fruits of labor in the salvation of souls, then a new element comes in for consideration, and between the personal gain of dying on the one hand, and the results of my apostolic labors on the other, I am in a strait; I am held in suspense; I am drawn powerfully in each of two opposite directions, having "*the* desire" (the article is here)—*that* desire so well known in Christian experience, to depart, by a release from flesh, analogous to the launching of a vessel cut loose from her moorings (as Paul's Greek word suggests); and the *being with Christ*—for this is very far the better of the two. But to abide in the flesh is more necessary for you.

Let the reader carefully note here—This great alternative which puts the apostle in such straits as to choice, is *not* between living to work for Christ here on the one hand, and on the other,

going away into long unconsciousness—a state of soul-sleep—waiting (as some animals do) in their winter torpor, hybernating, to be thawed out with returning spring—the torpid soul waiting for the resurrection trump to bring back its consciousness:—not this at all is Paul's alternative of perplexing suspense. But his alternative lies between such living as "is *Christ*" because it is serving him here; and a departing which is essentially being "*with Christ*"—which instantaneously results in being with Christ in a higher sense than can be realized here, for it is wholly peculiar to the heavenly world. Moreover, Paul's words plainly imply that this transition from living in the flesh to being with Christ, takes no account of intervening time. The being "with Christ" follows the "departing" with no appreciable state or time intervening. This is in harmony with Christ's words to the penitent and dying thief: "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Let it be noted also that as "being with Christ" is the highest and best description of the intermediate state (between death and the resurrection), so it is also Paul's description of the saints' eternal blessedness: "So shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4: 17). "With the Lord"—immediately after death; "forever with the Lord"—in the perfected heavenly state beyond the final judgment. Whether without and before the resurrection body—or with it—there is no heaven without Christ's manifested presence. The beginning and the consummation of the heavenly state is—*being with Christ.*

25. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;

26. That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

Confident that his prolonged life would be for their benefit, he knows that Christ will spare him for such service—to promote their faith and joy, consequent upon his coming to them yet again. So he joyfully postpones the higher personal blessedness of departing and being with Christ.

27. Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

28. And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.

"Only" (for every thing turns upon this), as citizens of the heavenly kingdom, live worthily of the gospel of Christ.—The word "conversation" here quite misleads the merely English

reader, not only because the Greek word does not by any means signify talk, spoken words, but because it means more than the usual Greek word translated "conversation" does in our New Testament version, and expresses its meaning more definitely. This Greek word signifies—To fulfill your *duties as citizens, i. e.*, of the heavenly kingdom. It should be compared with 3: 20: "For our *citizenship* is in heaven; we are *citizens* of that kingdom. Paul implores them to act the part of loyal citizens of this heavenly kingdom, in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. He remembers that Philippi is a Roman colony; that therefore its people enjoy the much prized rights and privileges of Roman citizens. So he turns their thought to their far higher privileges and consequent duties as citizens of Christ's kingdom. He uses these words, signifying citizenship (here and in 3: 20) in this epistle only; for he wrote to no other Roman colony. His wakeful mind never missed the opportunity to put the most telling force possible into his words by suggesting such illustrations as would come with clear significance and impressive emphasis upon his readers.*

Let me hear that ye stand (in the military sense of standing) in entire harmony of soul, jointly (all as one man) striving together (*wrestling* is the Greek), for the faith of the gospel.——But shall this "*faith* of the gospel" be taken in the sense of Christian truth, to be believed; or in the sense of growing, progressive faith in their hearts?——Apparently, the former as means to an end; the latter as the ultimate end itself. The truth must first be vigorously and unitedly maintained; then be heartily believed and made to work out all the results in the soul of thoroughly believed gospel truth.——And be in no respect alarmed by your persecuting enemies—such enmity against you being as to them a token and proof of their destruction, for it proves them to be enemies of God, and all his enemies have this and nothing else than this to expect. Equally is it to you a proof of your salvation, so far as it shows you to be on the side of God.

29. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

30. Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear *to be* in me.

In v. 29 the emphatic word is "*given*"—given as God's richest blessing—in two parts; (*a.*) That ye should have faith in Christ; (*b.*) That ye should have the privilege of suffering persecution for his sake. That this latter is one of God's blessings is the

* This English word "conversation"—now obsolete in the sense of our translators—was with them a great favorite, having been used to translate at least three different Greek words, viz., *anastrophe*, twelve times; *tropos*, once (Heb. 13: 5) and *politeuma* once (Phil. 3: 20) besides being used for the corresponding verb (Phil. 1: 27). These two last-named cases are specially suggestive, as we have seen.

doctrine of Scripture;—"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (2 Tim. 2: 11–13). See also 1 Peter 2: 20 and 3: 14 and 4: 14, 19.

Moreover, remember that in the hottest persecutions that will befall you, ye will only be in the same wrestling struggle which ye have seen in me, and now hear that I am enduring.

CHAPTER II.

Intensely earnest exhortations to mutual love and to harmony of thought and feeling (v. 1, 2); against strife and vanity and unto unselfish humility (v. 3, 4); enforced by reference to the mind of Christ as evinced in his incarnation; his disrobing of himself of his divine majesty, and humbling himself even to a shameful death (v. 5–8); for which God exalted him to the throne of the highest heavens and put all things under him (v. 9–11). Exhortations to work out their personal salvation because God works in them (v. 12, 13)—to a blameless and light-bearing Christian life, that Paul, their apostle may rejoice in their work (v. 14–16); even should his life close with martyrdom, he will rejoice, and would have them rejoice also (v. 17, 18). Hopes to send Timothy soon, whom he commends warmly (v. 19–24); does send Epaphroditus, and why (v. 25–27); and commends him to their warmest sympathies (v. 28–30).

1. If *there be* therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

2. Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind.

The drift of thought here can not well be missed:—I implore you by all the power of motive there is in Christ, in love, in the Holy Ghost, in Christian sympathy—by all these considerations I beseech you to make my joy complete by becoming one in mind, in spirit, in mutual love.——In the first clause, the word "consolation" should be exhortation, this more precisely representing the Greek word, and yielding a quite unexceptionable sense. Withal it avoids what is almost a tautology with the next clause —for between "consolation in Christ," and "comfort of love" the shade of difference is very slight. If the name of Christ carries in it any force of exhortation; if there is any joy in Christian love; if ye know any thing of fellowship in and with the Holy Ghost; if ye have any bowels of sympathy—then make my joy full.——And my joy will be made absolutely full by your becoming of one mind, all having the same love, and your heart full of

it; having a common soul, or yet more literally, being *fellow-souled*, all caring for one and the same thing. This combination of words, all looking toward the utmost Christian harmony of thought and feeling and the richest mutual love, is very remarkable.——Perhaps in the matter of strict exposition, the point of chief difficulty will be—how far this exhortation to think the same thing reaches into the realm of speculative opinion as to minute points of gospel truth. Can it be supposed that Paul could expect or exhort all minds to think alike upon all the details of gospel doctrine? Had he not seen enough of the human mind to know there are many very distinct types of intellectual character, resulting in great variety as to the way of apprehending truth?

To this I should answer—Paul did not concern himself greatly about opinions merely speculative; but he did long to have all his converts hold the same great truths of the gospel with like firmness of faith and all in the same spirit of love—the mind bent earnestly, yea supremely, upon the one common end of holy living and holy loving.

3. *Let* nothing *be done* through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Verse 3 is squarely antithetic to v. 2, describing the very opposite state of mind, and exhorting against it.——In the first clause Paul gives no verb. The authorized version supplies the verb "do;" "Let nothing be *done*" etc., but it is better to follow the almost invariable law for supplying ellipses, viz., to bring forward the last preceding word—which in the present case is the participle translated "*being of one mind*"—more literally, *minding the one thing*. So doing we have this sense:—minding nothing in the way of strife and vain-glory; having no mind that way; no thought, no passion, no love or aspiration toward strife and vain display for honor's sake. This, it will be seen, is stronger than the authorized version has it; for instead of saying, Let nothing be *done*, this says, Let nothing of that sort be even *thought*. It carries the prohibition back to the very fountain—to the thinking—to the mind's activities, and lays its command upon the very soul itself.——This looking at one's own, excessively, is the fearfully besetting sin of unsanctified men, and perhaps we may say peculiarly of those whose living turns on their reputation—professional men generally. Paul may have had his eye somewhat on those who were pressing themselves forward as religious teachers—those Judaizing men who caused both Paul and his churches so much trouble.

Over against this spirit, let them in lowliness of mind account others better than themselves. With a truly modest estimate of

their own good qualities, let them place others above themselves. Even if this be not always a perfectly truthful estimate, it is personally safe.——Calvin raises the question—How can those who really and obviously excel others in certain points conform to this precept? He answers by giving this view of the humble-minded man,* viz., "He is so conscious of his dependence on God and of his own imperfections and nothingness, that his own gifts only remind him that others must have gifts also, while his sense of his utter nothingness suggests to him that their gifts may well be superior to his own—higher in nature and in degree." ——In v. 4 the important word is "look"—in the sense of keeping your eye upon—as Paul elsewhere says: "Looking not on things seen, but on things unseen" (2 Cor. 4: 18). Keep your attention suitably on others' excellences and upon your own deficiencies. Labor to estimate their good qualities at their full value, and your own never above that standard. Labor to care for their interests as well as your own, appreciating them up to their full importance, even as you are wont to appreciate your own.——This amounts to the royal law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

5. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6. Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7. But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

This passage—one of surpassing interest and power—raises even a higher standard of Christian condescension and humiliation for others' good than Paul had been able to express before. For it exhorts—shall we not rather say, commands, enjoins—the same mind which the Son of God manifested in his incarnation and in the extreme disregard of his own honor from men and even of his apparent comfort and well-being during his earthly life.——The whole passage should be examined with great care, both because of the marvelous facts which it presents, and because our authorized version of v. 6 is by no means accurate.

One very important word in this passage is "*form*" †—"being in the *form* of God;" "took upon him the *form* of a servant." In applying this word to the Son of God, we must shut off all notion of what is *material;* for God is a Spirit, and as such can have no *form* at all in the sense in which matter always has form, shape—is either large or small, beautiful or otherwise.

* ταπεινοφρων † μορφη

This sense of the word being excluded by the very nature of God, the question returns:—What does it mean? To this I answer—That which in a spiritual being is most analogous to form in matter, viz., *manifested dignity and glory*. Our conception of what this dignity and glory in God really are may be very imperfect; yet we have no better words to express the reality than these. Whatever the Father was in point of manifested dignity and glory, that anterior to his incarnation, was the Son also. In this respect he was *as God*. But when he "became flesh and dwelt among us," he became in this respect a servant; he was made in the likeness of man; and even among men, he took not the position and rank of prince, monarch; but of servant.

In v. 6 it is not clear what the translators of our version could have meant by "robbery"—the only recognized sense of this word being—the taking from another by force or fraud what of right belongs to him. But it does not appear how there could be any *taking away* from God in this case, nor how the thing here supposed to be taken away, viz., *the being equal with God*—could be taken away by either force or fraud, or any analogous power. ——Turning from the English version to the original Greek, and construing its words in the light of their connection, we seem justified in explaining the Greek word for robbery * to mean, not the *act* of robbing, but rather, a thing very highly prized, even as objects of booty usually are. Then, the *being equal with God* (the precise sense of the Greek) must be construed in the line of the thought here, viz., equal with God, not in essential character, but in manifested dignity and honor—in the sense in which the Son was *in the form of God*. The sense of this verse then will be—That the Son, while in possession of all the dignity and glory of God, did not account it a matter of great value to retain this equality with God *in external dignity*. The retaining of this external rank and glory in the heavens was not in his eye what objects of plunder are in the eyes of robbers; but rather he held that manifested honor and glory to be a thing he could, for a time at least, forego—as Paul proceeds to say.

What the Son of God did *not* think having been said, Paul passes to the affirmative side to say what he did in fact do: "He made himself of no reputation." But if we would even approximate toward the true sense through the medium of this translation, we must distinguish very broadly between reputation and real character, for the Son did by no means make himself of no *character*, did not in the least impair the ineffable perfection of his moral nature; but he did voluntarily disrobe himself of his manifested dignity and honor as he wore them in the heavens. The Greek word, which is literally he "emptied himself," needs the same careful qualification, applying it to external honor, and not at all to internal and real qualities of character.

Yet further: "He took the *form* of a servant"—"form" being used as before in the sense of external state or condition. He

* αρπαγμων

appeared before men as supremely a *servant*—"he came not to be ministered unto but to minister;" *i. e.*, to serve, to do precisely the work of a servant. Leaving behind him all the insignia of rank and honor, he accepted poverty for his surroundings; the poor of earth for his people—his relatives after the flesh; a manger for his birthplace; a life of toil for subsistence; homeless, with never a place of his own to lay his head:—all this for his earthly lot. So was he "made in the likeness of men;"—more literally it should be, he became like common men, the verb having legitimately the sense of *become*, and the choice of the term for "man" indicating, not the dignity of the hero, but the dust-origin of human flesh—a merely common mortal.

"Being found in fashion as a man"—this word "fashion," however, not in our technical sense, but in the sense of his bearing; the way he bore himself; the general aspect he assumed. This was wholly that of a man. No angel from heaven could have detected in his personal appearance aught of the celestial dignity which, through all the cycles of their existence, they had seen him wear on the throne of the heavens above.

"He humbled himself"—put on the aspect and bearing of humility which the Scriptures exhort all his followers to wear; for this word is of the same family with that so often used for Christian humility: *—"and became obedient," even to the extent of dying for the world he came to save; a death of blended agony and shame—that of crucifixion.

Such in detail is Paul's description of the wonderful incarnation of the Son of God in human flesh. The fact of incarnation is of itself intensely and supremely wonderful. That the Son of God should become flesh at all, should bring himself into this mysterious yet most significant affinity and relationship with our frail humanity, and become a brother to the race he came to save—what a marvel in the eyes of the angels must this great fact appear! What shall we say of its condescension, of its humiliation, of its laying aside of dignity and glory, most deservedly held, most honorably worn before all the hierarchies of heaven? As to this, what can we do but admire? What response to this befits us but to adore and to praise?

If the incarnation of the Son of God into human form and relationship be of itself so wonderful so illustrative of condescension and humiliation and of love for the guilty and the lost, what shall we say of *such an incarnation*, of becoming *such* a servant, of descending so low upon the scale of human conditions and experiences? What shall we say of submitting to such indignities, of bowing his sacred head to such insults, of subjecting his human body to such torture, and his human soul to sufferings which we have no human experiences to measure, no faculties or powers at all equal to their comprehension, much less to their endurance?—Yet let us not forget that this voluntary condescension and humiliation are put here as the model for our imitation:

* ταπεινοφρων.

"Let the same mind be in you which was thus manifested in Christ Jesus." For every reason, there should be in this example not only an illustration of what voluntary condescension and humility for others' good signifies, but the motive force of glorious example to inspire us to its imitation.

9. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth;

11. And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

God is infinitely pleased with this great humiliation and condescension of his Son for such a purpose, and therefore rewards it with the highest possible exaltation and honor. "Hath exalted him supremely, and *as his reward* (so the Greek word implies) hath given him a name above every other, that at the name of *Jesus*"—that name given him at his human birth (Matt. 1: 21) signifying Savior and for ever suggestive of his whole work of suffering and death as the Savior of lost men.

"That *in this name* every knee should bow in reverent worship." *In* this name is the usual, not to say necessary sense of the original, referring (it would seem) to the constant usage of this phrase for prayer *in* his name. Here, however, the context shows clearly that the thought is not so much of offering petition as of rendering homage, for in it all beings in heaven above, on the earth, and under the earth—the already dead—are to unite.

It should be said, however, that the enforced subjection of rebels—real subjugation—does not appear to be included here, for this seems to be voluntary homage and worship, rendered in sincerity, to the glory of God the Father. It goes against including rebels toward God within the class, those "*under* the earth:" (1.) That the phrase "in the name of Christ" is suggestive of the offering of prayer through him to the Father, this phrase being in constant use in this sense; and, (2.) That "under the earth" never elsewhere in Scripture designates the abode of either rebel angels or rebel men. The lost angels Paul locates "in the air" (Eph. 2: 2 and 6: 12), and lost men far "away from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power" (2 Thess. 1: 9).

12. Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling:

13. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

"Always obeyed"—*whom?* Perhaps many readers suppose Paul intended to supply "myself"—complimenting them for having been obedient to his authority. It is far more probable

that he alludes to Jesus as "*obedient* even unto death" (v. 8), and with his eye on that expression said: "As ye have always obeyed the Lord, following, in this, the example of your Master, so now I beseech you, work your salvation through thoroughly, not as in my presence and out of regard to my feelings or personal and present exhortations; but now much more in my absence, bearing your own sole responsibilities all the more because I am absent. I would therefore connect what he says of his presence and of his absence, not with their being obedient, but with his exhortation to "work out their own salvation."

"With fear"—*i. e.*, of failure, in a matter of really infinite moment; and "with trembling" lest ye come short in the end—in a case where the interests at stake are simply infinite.

Work ye because God *works;* put forth your energies to this result because God is putting forth his to the same result. Our translation follows the original in using the same verb (radically the same) in both cases.

As God works both toward your willing and your doing, so put ye forth your energy both upon the voluntary activities of your mind, and upon your executive acts as well.——God does this out of his good pleasure—in the deep love of his heart; therefore all the more should ye work co-ordinately with him toward the same result, that ye may gratify the deep love of his heart, and requite his benevolent efforts with grateful returns.

Moreover, "fear and trembling" are specially befitting in view of the sanctity of such a presence—the Holy Spirit of God, working in your souls unto holy purposes and endeavors. Who with a due sense of a present God acting within his soul for such a purpose, could work otherwise than "with fear and trembling?"

14. Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15. That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

16. Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain neither labored in vain.

"Do all things without murmurings and disputings" among yourselves, that so ye may be blameless [irreproachable] and harmless [pure in life], the real sons of God, living out his spirit; "without blemish," and so above reproach—among a very wicked people before whom ye are to shine as luminaries—light-bearers—in this dark world; holding forth the light of the word of life, as the luminaries of the sky shed forth their light. That I may have joy not *in* but *against the day*—in prospect of the day of Christ—the sense here being, not that he may have joy when the day shall have come, but joy in the anticipation of its coming. This is the joy of knowing that I have not run my Christian race in vain.

But what "day" is meant by "the day of Christ?"——We

have seen the same words above (1: 6, 10), obviously in the same sense as here.——As to the significance of this phrase, we must choose between Christ's coming to Paul at Paul's death; and his coming to the whole world for the resurrection and final judgment, with the preponderance of proof very much in favor of the former and against the latter. For Paul knew that Jesus, speaking of the individual death of each Christian, had used these words; "I will come again and receive you unto myself" (John 14: 3), and Paul himself tells us in this epistle that for him to "depart" [at death] is "to be *with Christ.*" The day of his departing will therefore be to him, in a most emphatic sense, "the day of Christ." Moreover Paul thinks of this "day of Christ" as bringing him joy over and in his Philippian converts if they do well.——And here our decisive question is—Will this joy begin its grand realization at Paul's death or not until the resurrection and judgment day? If the latter, then Paul's intermediate state (between his own death and the resurrection) is in his thought essentially a blank, with no joy over his converts; no joy from the fruits of his Christian labor—till the final resurrection and judgment. But most certainly this was never his view of the case. His rich and glorious joy in his converts—"in the day of Christ"—begins at his own death—when he departs and is "*with Christ.*" This is to him—"the day of Christ,"—*i. e.*, the day of Christ *for this result*—viz., his joy over their conversion under his labors.

17. Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

18. For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.

Though I should be offered as a sacrifice by a martyr's death because of my gospel labors for yourselves and others, I shall have joy in myself, and I would fain hope a joy in common with you—which implies that they also should rejoice in it, if such be the will of God.——Then, to make the case yet more distinct, he exhorts them also in this supposed case to rejoice, and indeed, to rejoice in common with himself. In this v. 18 the verbs should be taken as imperatives—not indicatives—*i. e.*, as exhorting them to rejoice, and not as simply affirming that they do. This is truly estimating things as they appear in the light—not of time but of eternity. Paul is no stranger to the anticipated joys of that other world, to begin in their glory immediately upon his death, and he would fain bring his Philippian converts into the same hopes and anticipations.

19. But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.

20. For I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state.

21. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

22. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

23. Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me.

24. But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly.

Paul hopes and purposes to send Timothy to Philippi soon, to look into their spiritual life and report back to himself in prison. —His few words in commendation of Timothy represent him as eminently unselfish and sincerely devoted to every interest of Christ's kingdom. He cares for their spiritual welfare *naturally* —not for pay; not for his own personal interest, but genuinely *for Christ.* There might be others who professed to be laboring for Christ in his gospel work, but they were thinking of their own things, and not, like Timothy, solely of what pertained to Christ. But the Philippians had known his fidelity for Christ and his true devotion to Paul as a son to his spiritual father.

In this description of Timothy there lies a wealth of suggestion—not to say of instruction and rebuke—as to the bottom motives which underlie all genuine Christian labor for the souls of men.

25. Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labor, and fellow-soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.

26. For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick.

27. For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

Here is another of the choice spirits in whose presence and sympathy Paul found abiding joy.——Of this Epaphroditus but little is known. Some critics identify him with Epaphras (Col. 1: 7 and 4: 12 and Philemon v. 23), but this is very doubtful—the latter being of Colosse; the former apparently of Philippi. He had been sent with supplies from Philippi to Paul at Rome, and there had been sick nigh to death. Of this sickness his friends at home had heard. Having in a measure recovered, he was very anxious to relieve their apprehensions by returning to them in person.

28. I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful.

29. Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation:

30. Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.

This dear brother had served Paul most faithfully; perhaps had exposed his health even unto dangerous sickness in his personal attendance upon the apostle. Now, therefore, it is with special joy that Paul sends him back to the dear friends at Philippi. The warmth and wealth of personal affection manifest in these verses is one of the precious fruits of a pure gospel.

CHAPTER III.

Paul exhorts to beware of the Judaizing ritualists of that age (v. 2, 3); refers to himself as having as much reason for reliance on Pharisaic forms as any other man (v. 4–6), yet he had renounced all such reliances utterly that he might win Christ (v. 7, 8); shows what the winning of Christ amounts to (v. 9–11); and what his Christian aspirations are (v. 12–14); and exhorts to high aims and endeavors (v. 15–17); enforcing this appeal by reference to the course and the end of many enemies of the cross of Christ (v. 18, 19); in contrast with which he sets forth the Christian's glorious hope (v. 20, 21).

1. Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed *is* not grievous, but for you *it is* safe.

This chapter opens as if it were a supplement made up of afterthoughts;—a postscript to what precedes. It opens with a call to "rejoice in the Lord"—which had been the strain of the previous portion of the epistle, (See 1: 4, 18 and 2: 17, 18).—"To write the same things" is to reiterate the exhortation to "rejoice in the Lord." This is by no means irksome to himself, and will be safe for them—safe in its results, for such repose and joy in God are never out of order; never inappropriate.——Take note that this call to "joy in the Lord," was not based on any great success in worldly schemes—on any great acquisitions of wealth, or fame, or pleasure; but (strangely enough in a wordly point of view) upon his own possible martyrdom, and upon their not improbable perils and sufferings to be endured for Christ's sake. Jesus could make (and could be trusted to make) these dangers and perils "work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4: 17), and in this, let them rejoice.

2. Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.

3. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

That dangers and perils are in Paul's mind is made plain here. The chief persecutions which appear in Paul's recorded history were instigated by the class of men described here—Pharisaic men of Judaizing spirit.——To reach the precise sense of the word "dogs" (used figuratively) we must choose between Jewish usage and Oriental. Under the former it was applied to all Gentiles as such (Matt. 15: 26, 27) and was an epithet of contempt, to represent outlandish, ungodly, unprivileged people. Under the Oriental sense, dogs would represent whatever was unclean, annoying, disagreeable, unfit for decent society (Rev. 22: 15).—It seems not unnatural that Paul should retort upon Pharisaic Jews the very terms which they apply to Gentiles; intimating that the odious term far better befitted themselves—men of carping, ugly temper, naturally given to malice and envy.——"Evil workers" are they—the same class perhaps which Paul describes (2 Cor. 11: 13) as "false apostles," *deceitful workers.*"——Paul's word "concision" suggests that they gloried in circumcision, but were utterly far from true circumcision in its only worthy sense. His word implies that their circumcision was only a mutilation of the flesh, and never at all the putting away of sin, the cleansing (real circumcision) of the heart. Over against their claim, we (Paul says) are the real circumcision, the only men legitimately circumcised in the scriptural sense; we who worship God in the spirit (not in the flesh only); who rejoice in Christ Jesus (not in the ritualities of Judaism), and have no confidence whatever in a religion which reaches not beyond the flesh—a mere asceticism.

4. Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

5. Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

6. Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

If Pharisaic formalism and asceticism could ever be worth any thing, no man can have more of it than I had. As Isaac was, so was I circumcised on the best day for the merit of the rite; in my pedigree I was a full Israelite; in all that makes a good Pharisee, faultless, even to the extent of persecuting the church.—Paul put himself on record in much the same way before the Jewish council (Acts 22: 3, 4) and before Festus and Agrippa (Acts 26: 4, 5). (See also Gal. 1: 14.)

7. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8. Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,

9. And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

His Pharisaism was *gain* to him in the worldly sense, for it brought him honor and reputation before his countrymen, and in their notion it accumulated a marvelous wealth of *merit* as toward God—meritorious righteousness; the glory of good deeds —a long catalogue of works of righteousness passed to his credit in the account books of heaven. But all this accumulation, Paul came to look upon as utterly worthless—a simple abomination before God—to be discarded therefore at once and forever for the sake of Christ. All that righteousness and Christ too, he could not have by any possibility; all *that* must be renounced entirely and forever, if he would have Christ; so he bade it away; cast it from him as worthless; and gladly took Christ in the place of it all. All that Pharisaic righteousness was in his esteem but "filthy rags" (Isa. 64: 6)—to be cast off therefore, to make place for the white robes of Christ's own providing (Rev. 19: 8).——Doubtless I am counting all things whatsoever to be only loss when weighed against the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. Strong words are these —the surpassing excellence of this knowledge of Christ—this knowing him as my Lord; not as Jesus (Savior) only, but as Lord and King to whom I consecrate my life; for whom I have lost all and count all these lost things but the merest refuse and vileness, if only I may win Christ, and for the purpose of winning him.——"And be found *in him*"—a phrase peculiarly expressive of the Christian state and life, in which the emphatic words are "*in him,*" the being *in Christ* representing the new sphere of his very being, the new life of his soul, his new relations to Christ, such as no other words can express better. He *lives* in Christ; finds all hope, peace, and joy in him alone; trusts Christ's blood for pardon and acceptance before God; draws spiritual strength from Jesus only. These wonderful relations to Christ, so tersely expressed by the words "in Christ," Paul expands not infrequently (*e. g.*, Gal. 2: 20, Eph. 2: 5–10), as also here, for this whole passage (v. 9–11) is really but an expansion and explication of the sense of these pregnant words.——"Not having mine own righteousness" which as a Pharisee I supposed came of observing the law; but a sort of righteousness far other than that—one which comes through faith in Christ, a righteousness of God's own providing, and which we have upon condition

of faith— *upon faith*" being the exact sense of the Greek words.

The reader may notice that the old righteousness which Paul discards has two descriptive points; (*a.*) It was his own: (*b.*) It came of the law: but the new which he embraces has three descriptive points antithetic to those two: (*a.*) It is through faith, not through works of merit: (*b.*) It is through "the faith of Christ"—through believing in him: (*c.*) It is of God upon the believer—originating from God, and therefore surely approved and indorsed by him.

10. That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

11. If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

Still expanding and explaining what he sought and found in Christ, he proceeds: "That I may know him"—know him *intellectually*, apprehending all the facts of his person, character, and work; and may know him also *in my experience* of his power to save; know him as my Friend and Brother; my Redeemer and my Lord; know him as to all that he is to me and all that he will be to me forever. Truly here is a marvelous wealth of knowledge, the preciousness and value of which to human souls have absolutely no limit.

That I may know "the power of his resurrection." The sense of these words may be reached in one (perhaps both) of these two ways, viz., (*a.*) The power which raised him from the dead, often ascribed to the Spirit of God and thought of as analogous to that which raises souls dead in sin to their new life through regeneration (see Eph. 1: 19, 20 and notes there); or, (*b.*) The power which *after* his resurrection and as a result of it, Christ wields, unto the spiritual life of his people. "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (John 14: 7): "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28: 18).——As suggested above, it is supposable that neither of these expositions of what is meant by the power of Christ's resurrection need be pressed so as to exclude the other. Both seem to be in harmony not only with the facts, but with Paul's known conception of the facts.——This power makes Jesus fully competent, first to justify believers, placing them *right* before God; and then to *glorify* them in the great day, no less.

"That I may know the fellowship of his sufferings"—may experience in some points, at least, like sufferings myself, for the same great ends, being counted worthy to suffer for his name; not forgetting that if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him; "If we confess him before men, he will confess us before the angels of God." This doctrine was familiar to all the apos-

tles, and supremely inspiring. (See Rom. 8: 17): "If so be we suffer with him, that we may be glorified together;" and 2 Tim. 2: 11, 12: "A faithful saying; for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him;" and 2 Cor. 4: 10: "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be manifest in our body;" and 1 Peter 4: 13: "Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

"Being made conformable unto his death" seems to mean being persecuted and even martyred as he was, if by any means I may, even at such cost, reach the glorious resurrection.

Some critics would give to these words (v. 11) the very specific sense—"the first resurrection." There is nothing here, however, which suggests the first as contrasted with a second. This idea is therefore rather *put into* the words by the critics than *found* in them. Of course the scope of the passage bears our thought to the glorious resurrection—that resurrection which shall include the righteous dead. Paul has no occasion to allude to the wicked, nor to say whether they are to be raised then or ever. As to them he certainly does not deny, neither was it to his purpose to affirm.

12. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

13. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

14. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

"Not that I have already attained *what?* What is the thing not yet attained? The repetition of the word "attain," first used in v. 11 and then again here, very naturally suggests that Paul means—not yet attained to the resurrection from the dead. But this would have been quite too obvious to need saying. Besides, our authorized version misleads us by this repetition of the word "attain." The English reader naturally supposes that Paul uses the same word here as in v. 11; but this is not at all the case. The word in v. 11 * signifies—to *come to; to arrive at*, as *e. g.*, Eph. 4: 13, "Till we all *come unto* a perfect man," etc. But in v. 12 we have a very different yet quite common verb † which means, to *take hold of;* and without doubt, in the somewhat figurative sense of *grasping the prize* of the victor in the race; *i. e.*, in this word Paul already has his mind upon the illustration which he proceeds to expand more fully throughout verses 12–14—a competitor for the prize who has it full in his eye, and for-

* καταναω † ελαβον

getting all behind, presses forward with mightiest effort to grasp it at the end. He means therefore that he is still on the race-course—part of his ground gone over, yet not all; more is still before him; the glorious prize glitters and gleams full in his view; but his hand is not yet upon it. His whole soul is swelling with aspirations to reach it; he dare not slacken his speed to look back upon the space passed over, but bends himself with utmost endeavor to reach his goal and win his prize. Christ Jesus has laid hold of him and put him upon this race-course that he may win the prize of immortality; and now this thought inspires him to fresh zeal to lay hold of that prize for which Jesus has laid hold of him, virtually saying: "There is your prize; win it, and be mine forever!"

"Not as though I were already perfect," we read (v. 12). In determining the precise sense of this verb (made perfect)* we must choose between (*a*) the strictly ethical sense of personal perfection of moral character; and (*b*) the sense suggested by the figure of the race-course and its prize—viz., reaching the consummation of his life-conflict. This will give substantially the same sense as the word "attained," both being antithetic to the "following after" that he may lay hold of that prize for which he has been laid hold of by Christ Jesus. The things not yet fully attained stand over against the things now in hand, in the course of progress and endeavor. This interprets the words—"were already perfect"—in harmony with Paul's course of thought, and so fulfills one main condition of true interpretation. The analogy of the race-course, competing for the prize, is constantly present to Paul's thought throughout these verses (12–14). But in order to reach the full and precise sense of the passage, we need to analyze this figure and ask more definitely—What are those elements of the Christian life which Paul would illustrate by this running upon the race-course?

If we could put this question to Paul himself, I judge he would answer, substantially, there are two lines of effort—(*a*) Christian self-culture:—(*b*) Christian labor for the salvation of other men. I have work to do (1) upon my own heart—my own moral nature; and (2) for the souls of my fellow-men. The former has no limit—no place to stop, short of moral perfection; the latter no limit short of death—none short of being called away from the labors of earth. Paul's doctrine of Christian work included these two grand departments, and can by no means omit either till its natural limit is reached. True, his analogy of Christian life as a race for the prize, naturally gives prominence to the Christian's final reward at and after death; yet it is possible to push this analogy too far. Construed very strictly, the attaining of the prize, and the being already perfect would mean—the being crowned victor and receiving the prize of immortal blessedness. Yet it was scarcely necessary for Paul to say that he was not yet in heaven—that the prize of immortal glory had not yet been con-

* τετελειωμαι

ferred by the Supreme Judge of the contest. Hence we seem compelled to construe his "not having attained" and "not being perfected" to mean that he had yet more Christian work to do, and therefore was still bending himself to the yet unfinished Christian work of life. How much of this yet unfinished work, as it stood then before his mind, lay in the line of inner self-culture, and how much in the line of outward labor for others, he has not fully defined. We can not go beyond the fair interpretation of his words.

The "mark" (v. 13) is the goal at the end of this race-course. There stood full in his view the prize of God's calling from above in Christ Jesus. Through Jesus Christ God had sent down his call—the heavenly invitation—to his servant Paul to struggle for this immortal prize; and Paul had joyfully accepted it.

15. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

16. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

Now Paul applies his own example, as above given, to indicate the present duty of his Philippian brethren. The word "perfect" here * is not the verb used above (v. 12), but is the adjective of kindred meaning, from the same root. Its significance should be reached by examining Paul's own usage of this very word; *e. g.*, 1 Cor. 2: 6 and 14: 20 and Eph. 4: 13 and also Heb. 5: 14. "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect"—of fully developed mind and character. "Brethren, be not children in understanding; in malice, be ye children, but in understanding, be ye perfect" [in the authorized version "men"]—manifestly in the sense of adults in mind. "Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a *perfect* man"—the fully rounded and developed Christian character. "Strong meat" (solid food) is for the *perfect* (Eng. "those of full age")—adults. These passages may suffice to indicate proximately Paul's usage of this word "perfect." Yet perhaps we must say, it leaves the question still open whether he thinks of attainments in Christian knowledge, or in Christian character, or in both. He says—as many of you as consider yourselves fairly mature in Christian character and doctrine (a point he purposely leaves to each man's view of himself), be ye of this mind; take this view of your Christian life-work; and if in any respect, ye have views somewhat varying from these, God will, I trust, reveal this to you as the only just view of Christian life. However, in so far as we have made Christian attainments, let us walk by this same rule, never resting at the point already gained, but still pressing on to higher attainments. In v. 16 the better textual authorities omit the words—"rule, let us mind the same thing."

* τελειοι.

17. Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

18. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ:

19. Whose end *is* destruction, whose God *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

He urges them all unitedly to follow his example, and also the example of those of like spirit and life—referring probably to his well known friends and fellow-laborers, of whom Timothy and Epaphroditus have been named.——One reason for pressing this was that many (who would be thought Christians) live far otherwise—"enemies of the cross of Christ."——He draws their character and life clearly, even vividly:—Thoroughly sensual, and so depraved as even to glory in their shame; their hearts worldly to the core; caring for, "minding" only earthly things.—Their end shall be *as* their works—only destruction.——The tender spirit of the apostle can not speak of them but with tears.——It may be noted here that the drift of Paul's thought is upon practical living rather than upon theoretical knowledge. The "minding" of earthly things is the heart's love, the current of its passions, appetites, aspirations.

20. For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ:

21. Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Such living—a heart so base, so earthly and sensual—by no means becomes us, "*for*" ("gar") "our citizenship is in heaven;" we have no right to live that low, sensual life, inasmuch as we have been adopted into God's family and honored with the rights and privileges of citizenship in his kingdom above. Ye Philippians who bear and who well appreciate the honors of your Roman citizenship, ought to comprehend this far higher honor of being citizens, not of Rome, but of heaven.——Not only are we already citizens of that realm, but we shall in due time be borne thither; for we are looking for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, to come from thence to change this body of our humble estate into a like form with his glorious body (as seen in vision by John, Rev. 1: 13–16) through that energy which is all powerful to subject all things to himself.——This means that the resurrection bodies of Christ's saints will be like his own—made so by his omnipotent energy; and that this transformation will occur when he shall come visibly from heaven to raise the dead and clothe his saints with this glory, as yet to us inconceivable.

Surely this should be an inspiration to all Christ's children to rise entirely above the grovelling sensuality which Paul's burning words so vividly portrayed.

CHAPTER IV.

Concluding exhortations; to stand fast in the Lord (v. 1); to be of one mind (v. 2, 3); to rejoice in the Lord and to exercise self-control (v. 4, 5); to keep their hearts free from anxious care by means of prayerful trust in God, that so God's peace may keep their hearts in Christ Jesus (v. 6, 7); to study all most noble things and follow the apostle's example (v. 8, 9). Grateful allusions to their kindness in supplying his personal wants; his own experience in this regard (v. 10–14); special reference to their early remembrance of his wants (v. 15–17), and also of their recent contribution (v. 18)—which suggests the assurance that God will supply their need not less than they had his—for all which, let glory be to God the Father (v. 19, 20); closing salutations (v. 21).

1. Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, *my* dearly beloved.

"Beloved and longed for"—not entirely synonymous, the latter expressing his longing desire to see them yet again.——My "joy" now; my "crown" in the glorious future when personally I shall "enter into the joy of my Lord."——Paul's meaning in this use of the term "crown," he expands more fully, 1 Thess. 2: 19, 20: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy." Perhaps this is one element in that "prize of his high calling from God in Christ Jesus," toward which with utmost might he is pressing onward. He would win souls to Christ, deeply conscious that all such winning will be toward and unto his own eternal joy. "Steadfast;" hold your ground in the military sense, never falling back before your enemies, but standing firmly for truth and righteousness—all for Christ your Lord.

2. I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

3. And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and *with* other my fellow-laborers, whose names *are* in the book of life.

"Euodias" should be spelled Euodia—the name of a sister in the church, not of a brother. The repetition of the word "beseech" is peculiar and probably significant, implying that he besought them individually and severally, as being both in fault and deserving this gentle rebuke. In this church at Philippi, the gospel made its first conquests in a group of devout and prayerful women, at that river-side place of prayer (Acts 16: 13–15).

These two sisters in the church, we must suppose, were prominent Christian laborers, perhaps deaconesses in office: but unhappily had been not altogether "of one accord." Hence this personal and very emphatic exhortation—that they "be of one mind," harmonious in spirit and counsel, and not discordant;—and all, "in the Lord"—*i. e.*, in the love of his dear name, because of their common relationship to their supreme Lord and Master. His very name should quell all party spirit; all personal ambitions and jealousies, and should bring their souls into sweet accord and mutual love.——In v. 3 our authorized version makes the exhortation general:—Help all those women who labored with me in the gospel. But Paul's words had specific reference to the two sisters named in v. 2—the strict translation being—Help them [the sisters], inasmuch as they (or since they) labored with me in the gospel.——He then adds: "Help Clement also;" the same, it is currently supposed, who subsequently became bishop of Rome. This supposition rests on the very distinct testimony of Origen, Eusebius, Jerome and Epiphanius. ——The expression—'Whose names are in the book of life," is with good reason traced for its origin to the Old Testament: Ex. 32: 32 and Ps. 69: 28 and Isa. 4: 3 and Ezek. 13: 9 and Dan. 12: 1.

It is not easy, perhaps not possible, to identify this "true yokefellow." The Philippians doubtless knew the man who had been Paul's bosom friend and efficient fellow-laborer there. He may have been the senior bishop among those "bishops and deacons" of chapter 1: 1.

4. Rejoice in the Lord alway: *and* again I say, Rejoice.
5. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord *is* at hand.

'Again I *will* say" is the exact translation. Paul felt that he had good reason for repeating those words. In such a Savior as Jesus—in such a Lord, so worthy to be King and Lord of all, ruling with so great power, for ends so wise, and with results so glorious, and withal so sure, why should we not 'rejoice alway?' ——"Moderation," interpreted by its original Greek, suggests mildness of temper, gentleness of bearing, that self-control which holds all passions in subjection to the proprieties of the case. Whether there were special reasons then and there for this admonition, they knew doubtless better than we now can.

"The Lord is at hand," ever near, always to be thought of as near and never afar off. This consideration should serve to quell unhallowed excitement.

These words have been sometimes construed to mean—The personal coming of the Lord is near in time. This construction puts more into them than they legitimately signify, and must be sustained, if at all, by resorting to other passages assumed to be analogous. Into this discussion I can not enter here, further than to say: We have great moral force in the words when we interpret

them as suggesting that the issues of the eternal state are *always* near at hand: the Lord himself is always near—near as knowing all there is in us, all there is about us, all our thought and feeling, and especially all those excited feelings which Paul specially exhorts them to moderate and control under a sense of an Omniscient Mind ever present. This, it seems to me, is an exposition of Paul's thought, at once appropriate in itself and in harmony with the context, while moreover the sense is legitimately found in his words.

6. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Paul's word here, "Take no care," is the same which our Lord used so often and so emphatically (*e. g.*, Matt. 6: 25, 27, 28, 31, 34), translated there, "Take no thought," in the sense, *anxious* thought. The thing to do, over against this thing *not* to be done, is—Make your wants all known to God in continual prayer and supplication, not omitting thanksgiving in grateful acknowledgment for blessings conferred. Prayerful trust in God as an overruling Providence—as one who feeds the ravens and marks every sparrow's fall—is the legitimate antidote for anxious care. Why not? Can any thing, good or ill, come upon us without our Father? Can any good fail us if we cast all our care upon him? Shall we doubt either his love for us, his wisdom to judge for us, or his power to supply all our need?——"By prayer and supplication"—the words differing from each other only as the former is more general, the latter more specific; yet combined, they include every sort and form of prayer, constant, definite, according to your definite wants—your heart being always prayerful, and withal confiding and grateful. So shall that peace of God which surpasses all human thought keep your souls quiet and confiding in Christ Jesus.

8. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.

9. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

This final exhortation, poured from his full, overflowing heart, assumes that they have a sense of what is true, honorable (better than "honest"), just and pure, lovely and worthy of esteem and high repute; and begs them to think of all these things, to appreciate them, cultivate them, and to manifest them evermore in

their life. His own example he is able in all good conscience to commend to their imitation.

10. But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

11. Not that I speak in respect of want; for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content.

12. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every-where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

14. Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.

The recent contribution for his material wants, sent by hand of Epaphroditus, is referred to here. It had given him great joy in the Lord. The word here used, "flourish again," is specially significant of beauty and fitness: Ye have *blossomed out again*, as if for a new set of flowers and fruitage. Ye had it in your heart before, but lacked opportunity. Very delicately Paul remarks that he does not allude to this subject on account of his own personal wants, for he has learned to endure privations cheerfully, or to enjoy good things from his friends gratefully. ——The clause, "every-where and in all things," seems more precisely to mean, in every individual thing, and in all things in general. I have learned in my experience how to live with either little or much, in poverty or in ample abundance. In v. 13 the word "*do*" is scarcely comprehensive enough to suggest the full sense of Paul's words. Rather: I am equal to all things—am strong for all things—through Christ who gives to me all strength. It covers not *doing* only, but suffering as well; any thing the Lord's providence may bring upon him. Yet though such is my experience and such my history, it is well that ye sent me those supplies.

15. Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

16. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

17. Not because I desire a gift; but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

The event here referred to is probably the point of his history, given Acts 17: 14, when hostile Jews from Thessalonica came upon him at Berea, and it was thought prudent for Paul to with-

draw—ultimately to Athens. This was soon after he had planted the church at Philippi. They had sent relief to him when in Thessalonica. With exquisite delicacy he intimates that his interest in these benefactions from them did not arise chiefly from his personal enjoyment of the gift, but much more from the benefit they must receive from the giving. "It is more blessed to give than to receive;" and this fruit, abounding to their account, Paul felt that he might legitimately rejoice in, and might not improperly refer to in this connection.

18. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things *which were sent* from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.

19. But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

20. Now unto God and our Father *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

My wants are amply supplied; your gifts were not only most acceptable to me, but most fragrant, even as the odors of sweet incense, before God. As ye have supplied my wants munificently, I am sure my God whom I serve will supply all your need. Whether this "all need" included earthly good, and if so, to what extent, is not made entirely clear. Two considerations lie against giving much prominence to earthly good: (*a.*) That it held no high place in Paul's thought or esteem; (*b.*) That the words "in glory" may be construed to indicate the sphere in which this glorious supply of all their utmost need is to lie. Assuming Paul to mean that, in the glorious riches of his mercy in Christ, God will supply all their need in the world of glory, we give a very just exposition of his words, and have a truth taught here at once pertinent and glorious. A doxology—Glory to God for such a hope!—is most befitting here.

21. Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you.

22. All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar's household.

23. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

"Every saint," with no exception.

The allusion to "those of Cæsar's household" implies that the gospel had reached even the inmates of the royal palace. Paul's place of confinement may have been contiguous—a circumstance which may have been overruled of God to this early introduction of the gospel into the royal household. He had previously referred to the fact that his "bonds in Christ" (on him for Christ's sake) "had become known in all the palace" (1: 13).

EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.

INTRODUCTION.

Preliminary to the intelligent, profitable study of this epistle are the questions:—

I. Where was Colosse?

II. By whom, when, and where was this epistle written?

III. Occasion and objects of this writing;

IV. The analogy between this epistle and that to the Ephesians; coupled with the special use to be made of it.

I. Colosse, anciently a very considerable city in the province of Phrygia, Asia Minor, long since in ruins, lay on the river Lycus, near its confluence with the Meander; was fifteen miles east of Laodicea, and the same distance from Hierapolis, both of which are named in this epistle (4: 13).

The province of Phrygia was somewhat extensively traversed by Paul in his missionary journeys twice (Acts 16: 6 and 18: 23), yet he seems not to have made the personal acquaintance of the people of Colosse nor even of Laodicea (Col. 2: 1). Scripture history has not said definitely who first planted the gospel in Colosse nor when; but this epistle shows that Epaphras was of that city (4: 12) and had been "for them a faithful minister of Christ" (1: 7), through whom Paul had been definitely apprised of their condition.

II. No sensible critic has ever disputed the authorship of Paul. There is no reasonable ground for doubt that he wrote it during his first imprisonment at Rome, very nearly at the same time with that to the Ephesians, and considerably earlier than that to the Philippians—this later date for the epistle to the Philippians being indicated by things which suggest a more stringent severity of confinement and apparently a near approaching crisis in his case. Moreover, the epistle to Philemon was apparently sent at the same time by the hand of Onesimus, both these brethren as well as Epaphras having been residents of Colosse (Col. 4: 7–9, 12 and

Philemon v. 10–17).——The date of this epistle is assigned to the early part of A. D. 62.

III. The occasion and object of this letter may be gathered from the letter itself. Through Epaphras, a pastor of that church, Paul had heard what, on the one hand, moved his loving spirit to great prayer in their behalf; and on the other hand caused him not a little anxious solicitude lest they might be beguiled into false views of Christ and of the Christian scheme. It seems quite plain that the mass of that church were still steadfast in their Christian faith (2 : 5); yet equally plain that pernicious doctrines were broached among them, involving real peril to the purity of both their faith and their practice. The elements of these pernicious doctrines were a compound: (*a.*) Jewish Ritualism; (*b.*) Asceticism; (*c.*) Angel-worship and angel-mediatorship; (*d.*) Sustained apparently by more or less pretensions to philosophy—doubtless of the sort "falsely so called." To these features we shall need to give attention as we meet them in the epistle.

It is to be specially noticed that Paul opposes these false notions, not mainly by direct assault and such discussion as might supposably demolish them one by one; but rather by setting forth prominently the great fundamental truths of the Christian system. As in all practical points, those incipient, insidious errors disparaged the person of Christ and involved, to say the least, exceedingly imperfect views of his supremacy, Paul began at the bottom by setting forth the real and perfect divinity of the eternal Son of God; his Creatorship; his absolute Headship to the church, and the infinite fullness which dwelt forever in him, and which therefore superseded all occasion for such professed helps or aids to the Christian life as this new teaching proposed. Christ supreme, Christ all-sufficient, Christ all and in all—the only Savior and the only Lord; the Author of all pardon for sin; the Fountain of all spiritual life and power to his people; the infinite Lord whose supremacy could never admit any intermediate power, angelic or otherwise:—such are the points put strongly, to the utter subversion of that new and other gospel, and to the rooting and grounding of all real converts in the faith as it is in Jesus.——It is this masterly method for demolishing error by putting forth those grand points of truth which themselves suffice to explode it, that has given this epistle its enduring and priceless value. It stands before the ages—the everlasting refutation of every scheme of error which lives and can live only by dishonor-

ing Christ, by practically denying his infinite supremacy, and disparaging the absolute fullness and sufficiency of his salvation.

Comparing this with other epistles of Paul in the points of doctrinal occasion and object, it appears that the mischiefs in the churches of Galatia, though in some points similar, had spread more widely, rooted more deeply, and become more immediately perilous to their Christian faith and life. Paul's rebukes in that epistle as compared with this are sharp, decisive, enforced with his utmost emphasis and energy. Here they are precautionary, forewarning; and as said above, so entirely based on broad views of the true doctrine which must itself supplant the incipient errors, that they have a permanent value of transcendent importance.——The Ephesian church was manifestly threatened with errors somewhat akin to these which appeared in Colosse—of which Paul had some apprehensions—prophetic or otherwise—when he met the elders at Miletus (Acts 20: 29, 30). These he had yet further occasion to forefend at a later period by the mission of Timothy to that church (1 Eps. 1: 3, 4). But in our epistle to the Ephesians, the traces of Oriental errors are less distinct.

Remarkably the churches of the West, especially at Philippi and Thessalonica, seem to have almost entirely escaped the contagion of these errors. The purity of those churches was a perpetual comfort and joy to our Great Apostle, bearing so heroically and with such matchless sympathy "the care of all the churches" (2 Cor. 11: 28).

IV. In many points this epistle to Colosse has striking analogies with that to Ephesus—analogies somewhat apparent in the earlier and doctrinal portion, but much more so in the later and practical. The same breadth and depth of thought in his treatment of the great doctrinal themes in hand is apparent in both; the same deep sense of the intimate relations of sound doctrine to honest and worthy living; the same grand views of what constitutes a true Christian life; the same moral duties, incident to most diversified social relations:—all these stand out with similar prominence and with like exquisite beauty in both these great epistles. It is a fair presumption, resting not merely on these points of general similarity, but on the yet closer resemblance in terms and phrases, that they were written nearly at the same time, while yet the leading thoughts and phrases were fresh for each. Perhaps the internal evidence

drawn from comparing the two, favors the theory that "Colossians" was written first, so that some of its points were somewhat more fully expanded in the subsequently written epistle to the Ephesians.

A paragraph near the close of this epistle (4: 16) gives us a pleasant fact, bearing upon the practical use to be made of Paul's epistles, viz., that, having been read to the assembled brethren of the church particularly addressed, they were loaned for similar use in neighboring churches. He directs that after they had read this, they cause it to be read also in the church at Laodicea (fifteen miles distant); and that in like manner they secure the hearing of a letter he had written to the church at Laodicea.——Ages before printing was known, the reading of manuscript letters from the great apostle was an event in the history of any church. Let them therefore mutually lend and borrow these precious documents, and so turn them to their best and utmost account.——It was by such means that these inspired documents made their way not only into the general knowledge of the churches, but into established credit as the genuine writings of apostolic men.

EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.

CHAPTER I.

After the usual salutations (v. 1, 2) Paul speaks of his gratitude and prayer to God in their behalf ever since he first heard of their faith and love for all the saints, this being the natural fruit of gospel truth (v. 3–8); speaks more in detail of the blessings which he implores in their behalf (v. 9–11); of the ground for thanksgiving to God (v. 12–14); then affirms the real divinity of the Son of God; his supremacy; his universal creatorship (v. 15–17); his headship as to the church (v. 18); the fullness that dwelt in him to the result of accomplishing perfectly the great work of human redemption and the reconciling of all things unto God (v. 18–20); and of this reconciliation in their particular case (v. 21–23); speaks of his own sufferings for the church as related to Christ's (v. 24); of his ministry to the Gentiles, assigned him as his gospel work (v. 25–29).

1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus *our* brother,

2. To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Timothy was with Paul at Rome. Apparently his name in this salutation signifies only his warm sympathy with Paul in his care of all the churches, and in his prayers and thanksgivings in their behalf. His presence appears only in these relations. The "we" (Paul and Timothy) runs through the portion which speaks of their common prayers, thanksgivings, and preaching labors (v. 3, 4, 9, 10, 28), but not elsewhere.

3. We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

4. Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love *which ye have* to all the saints,

5. For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;

6. Which is come unto you, as *it is* in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as *it doth* also in you, since the day ye heard *of it*, and knew the grace of God in truth:

7. As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellow-servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;

8. Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.

In the first clause of v. 5 the words, "for the hope," etc., fail to indicate clearly the relations of this hope. "*Because of*" translates the original better than "for"—the sense being that the love which they have for all the saints is quickened specially by the glorious hope laid up for them in heaven; *i. e.*, this love was in its nature Christian, and was quickened intensely by their mutual hope of a common, blessed immortality.——Of this they had heard in all that true gospel preaching which had gone forth widely, bearing fruit and growing elsewhere as among themselves.

"The grace of God known in truth"—*i. e.*, truthfully, according to its reality.——Epaphras, then Paul's beloved fellow-servant, but formerly their gospel minister, had testified to the apostle of their "love in the Spirit"—love that flourished in the atmosphere of the Divine Spirit—only in and under his inspirations.

9. For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

10. That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

11. Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness;

These are the points made in his continual prayer in their behalf, and serve to show what the Christian life truly should be —full of the knowledge of his will; a life worthy of the Lord and pleasing him in all points; evermore girded with spiritual strength, according to the measure of his glorious power to help; strength moreover that will avail us to endure all labors and all trials with joy.——If this puts the standard high, it equally shows the help of God's grace and strength to be great, unto the attainment of this high standard. The labor to be done, and the strength proffered to help in the labor, adjust themselves to each other. If God asks much, he also promises to give much.

12. Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

13. Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son:

14. In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins:

To the Father's love it must be ascribed ultimately that men are new-born to holiness and made meet, fit, to share in the inheritance of the saints in *the* light—the bliss of heaven. This "light" stands over against the realm of darkness from which his grace delivers. Marvelously does God pluck his people out of the jaws of death and translate them into the kingdom of his beloved Son—here called "the Son of his love"—in the sense, perhaps, not merely of being his well-beloved Son, but of manifesting the Father's love in coming down from heaven on no errand but of love, for no work but one of love.——"In whom we have *the* redemption," the well known redemption which is through his blood, and which brings with it as its first and chief blessing, the forgiveness of sin. This, Paul brings to view here as the great, the central, crowning work wrought by Christ. By this redemption it is that we are saved from the power of darkness and death, and transferred into the kingdom of God's beloved Son.

15. Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature:

16. For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

17. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist:

The subject treated here is at once profoundly deep and of surpassing importance—the true nature and relations of the Son of God (the "Logos" of John), as he was before his incarnation. "Who is"—is evermore and is by nature, "the image of the invisible God;" not *an* image, one among many that are supposable, but *the* image—the only one. The Greek article is to be assumed here idiomatically, after the verb of existence, and is essential to express the exact thought.——"Image," in its fundamental sense, is that which truly *represents* something else, the copy of it, its truthful manifestation. In this sense the Son is the image of the Father. I see no ground to question that the popular use of this phrase—"a son the very image of his father"—gives the true sense here. The word "invisible," said of God, assumes not only that no eye hath ever seen his form, or ever can; but that he becomes in a sense visible, manifest, through his Son. As Jesus himself said: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." No material form is to be thought of, yet the Son is a real manifestation of what else in the Infinite God, would have been to us invisible and unknown. The same doctrine on this point appears elsewhere; *e. g.*, "Who, being the brightness" [effulgence] "of his glory and the very image of his substance"

(Heb. 1 : 3) :—"Who, being in the form of God," did not persistently retain his equality with God in glory; but emptied himself (*i. e.*, of his visible, manifested glory). (Phil. 2 : 6, 7.)

Ellicott says—"Christian antiquity has ever regarded the expression "the image of God" as denoting the Eternal Son's perfect equality with the Father in respect to his substance, nature, and eternity"—*i. e.*, as being the Father's image in all things save that the Father is unbegotten and holds in himself a Fatherhood, corresponding to which the Logos held as to the Father a Sonship.* But these words, though perhaps the best possible for their purpose, are but a feeble attempt to set forth the profound mysteries that lie in the being of the Infinite God.

"The first-born of every creature." The term "first-born" admits three possible senses :—(*a.*) Priority of birth; the first of several sons—its primary meaning. (*b.*) Supremacy; superior dignity or power—a secondary meaning, resulting from the ancient Jewish (perhaps Oriental) usage of giving special prerogatives to the first-born son—"the birthright." (*c.*) Priority in point of existence, applied to one to affirm his existence before any thing else existed, yet without implying that his existence had a beginning analogous to theirs. The two last (*b.*) and (*c.*) may supposably be combined in the same usage. The New Testament has examples of (*a.*) (Matt. 1 : 25 and Luke 2 : 7 and Heb. 11 : 28); also of (*b.*) (Heb. 11 : 23): "The church of the first-born"—who perhaps were angels, certainly beings of high rank, yet any reference to priority in existence is doubtful. See also Rom. 8 : 29 : —"Whom he foreknew, he predetermined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he (the Son) might be the first-born among many brethren"—said with no reference to prior birth, or even to priority of existence; but involving supremacy, headship among the many who bear his spiritual image. Under this head we may include the phrase twice occurring, "The first-born of [or from] the dead" (Col. 1 : 18 and Rev. 1 : 5)—which means more than priority of resurrection—even that He is the Author and potential cause of the resurrection of his people. The passage (Heb. 1 : 6)—"When he bringeth his first-begotten into the world he saith—'Let all the angels of God worship him,'" may possibly refer to his human birth, yet not certainly, or at least, not exclusively; for there may be a reference to the Old Testament prediction—"I will make him my first-born; higher than the kings of the earth" (Psalm 89 : 27).

Excepting the passage in hand, this list exhausts the cases of usage in the New Testament. Aided by the light they give and by our context, let us seek the true sense of "first-born" in this passage.

The sense (*a.*) must be rejected because He certainly is not classed here among other creatures, only being the first among

* This assumes that the relation of Sonship is eternal, and is not merely the result of the incarnation—an assumption which to say the least admits of grave doubt.

them to be brought into being. The entire drift of the context forbids this construction. For he is the "image of God;" and for every reason God must be the *Great Uncreated*; and the Son could not be in his image if really he lacks this cardinal element of the Father's nature and being. Moreover, "the first-born One" is declared to be universal Creator, and this affirmation is made exceedingly strong and all-comprehensive, indicating that Paul designed to foreclose the supposition that this first-born could himself be one of the created beings. This primary sense (*a.*) must therefore be promptly rejected.

The second sense (*b.*) is manifestly involved here, though not to the exclusion of the third (*c.*). This first-born bears absolute supremacy; prerogatives than which there can be none higher; a birthright comprehensive of all honor and all power. So the context purposely and most abundantly shows. There is also included the idea of priority in time as well as in rank. The element of time is probably included in the word "first-born." It is so important in the writer's view that he makes it a special affirmation (v. 17)—"He is *before all things*." The same truth is implied in his universal Creatorship. The Maker must exist *before* the things he makes. In this view of the sense of the word "first-born," we must rest.

"The first-born *of every creature*," or as some prefer—of the whole creation—might be translated—First-born as to every thing created—not in a sense which includes him among created persons or things, but, as shown above, in a sense which puts him before and above them all.

In v. 16 the word "for" is important since it shows that the facts affirmed in this verse come in as the ground or reason of what is declared in v. 15. The Son is not only *before* but infinitely above all else that exists (the Father excepted) because he created them all. The enumeration, the reader will notice, is very specific and comprehensive:—first, "all things;" then by their locality—things in heaven; things in earth:—then by their nature as spiritual or as material—"things visible and things invisible:" then as to their rank—all the greatest, noblest, most exalted beings in the universe, and of course by implication, all inferior orders and creatures as well. Let it also be noted that our English translation—"by him" (beginning of v. 16) is not precisely accurate, for the Greek preposition is (en) *in*—in him were all things created. This is Paul's favorite preposition, and though it may seem slightly transcendental, yet does it not suggest that in Paul's thought, all created things were potentially *in* the Infinite Creator before they became actual by being born into a real existence? All lay *within* him as to power and as to plan, before the creative fiat—before "he spake and it was;" before "he commanded, and it stood" forth in actual being. In the last clause of this v. 20 two other prepositions are used, viz., "by" and "for;" created *by* him as the author; *for* him as the final end for which creatures were made. We must notice also

that the very same words ("by" and "for") are used of God (Rom. 11 : 36)—a passage which, though it suggests no distinction between the Father and the Son, yet does not specially indicate the Son, and therefore seems to justify our reference of the words to the Father:—"Of him, and through him and to him are all things—to whom be glory forever." This is one of the methods in which the Scriptures incidentally assume the divine equality of Father and Son. The creation of all things is ascribed to each in precisely the same terms.

"By him all things consist" (v. 17)—the word "consist," however, is nearly obsolete as to the sense given it here—which is quite foreign from *consistence* as applied to matter, and from consistency, used for propriety of conduct. The Latin suggests the true sense—*stand together*—stand and are sustained in their standing, in their order and their functions. The writer to the Hebrews has the sentiment—"Upholding all things by his powerful mandate" (1 : 3). Paul at Athens (Acts 17 : 28) expressed the same: "In him we live, and move, and have our being;" and Peter (2 Eps. 3 : 5) has the same verb to indicate the processes of this world's creation. (See notes on the passage.)

In view of all that Paul has said here of the Son as "the image of the invisible God," as the "first-born" and as the universal Creator, some reader may ask—What is the inner, essential distinction between the Father and the Son? Are we to think of the Son (the Logos of John) as in any sense begotten, produced, of the Father—*i. e.*, as dependent on the Father for his being? If not, how can these descriptive names be appropriate? And if so, how can we conceive of the Son as really equal to the Father? How can a being who owes his existence to another be equal to the Great Uncreated, Uncaused, who owes his existence to none?

Pushing this inquiry back of the incarnation and treating it as irrespective of that event or fact—if we must meet this problem—What were the distinctive elements of Fatherhood in the one case and of Sonship in the other, as they existed eternally? I must answer—I do not know. To me it lies among the yet unrevealed mysteries of the infinite God.——I can suppose, with what seems to me apparent reason, that there was eternally some distinction, to us yet unrevealed, which made it appropriate that the Logos should be selected to become incarnated in human flesh and be designated in human speech as Son in reference to the Father. What this something is (or was), lies among the things yet unrevealed;—probably among things for the full comprehension of which, our faculties are yet unequal. There, I judge it to be our wisdom to leave it.——It is far more important that we stand by the negations than push unwarrantably into affirmations. Negatively, let us stand to the doctrines—no inferiority of power, dignity, rank; no beginning of his existence; no form of emanation or ideal production from the Father so that his existence is really *derived* as opposed to underived, ab-

solute, eternal. These negative propositions seem to be essentially and necessarily involved in any just conception of the Supreme Creator—an equal, eternal Son.

Paul's object in presenting these facts respecting the Son of God was unquestionably to counteract incipient errors already broached at Colosse. Those teachers of error were disparaging Jesus Christ; dishonoring his nature and his work. It is well known that the Gnostic heresy as subsequently developed more fully by Cerinthus and his disciples, "saw in Christ only a mere man, upon whom at his baptism a higher Æon descended and united himself, but which left him again after his work of redemption was completed." (Olshausen, p. 180.) The very first foreshadowing of such doctrine, Paul must have deemed it vital to the gospel scheme—vital to the great fundamental truths of Christianity—to withstand and quench.

18. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preëminence.

19. For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fullness dwell;

20. And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven.

This One—this same exalted, divine Son of God, having become incarnate, is the Head of the body (the church), according to the figure, frequent in Paul, under which the church is compared to the human body, and Christ is its Head. So Eph. 4: 15, 16 and 1: 23; Rom. 12: 5; 1 Cor. 10: 17. This spiritual headship of Christ to the church—a relation most intensely vital to all her spiritual life—was (we must assume) ignored or perhaps even rudely assailed by the new sect at Colosse.

Christ is also the beginning *—this Greek word signifying absolute supremacy—the center and source of all power, and specially, the source of all *spiritual* life to the body (his church), and personally to every new-born soul. As he was universal Creator of all material worlds and of all beings, whether of heaven or of earth, so is he the spiritual Creator whose vitalizing word breathes spiritual life into the otherwise spiritually dead souls of men—the same sense in which the apostles speak of him as "the Prince of life" (Acts 3: 15).——The new birth, a spiritual creation, is a conception familiar to Paul (2 Cor. 5: 17 and Gal. 6: 15).

Still accumulating the points of his superiority and supremacy, he proceeds—"He is the first-born from the dead"—not merely the first to rise from the grave, but the first to rise as the glorious conqueror of death and the grave; the first who ever came up from those realms of death with the majesty of a king over that

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world—to die no more, and to rule the empire of the under-world no less than of all other worlds, for the redemption of his people and for the glory of his universal kingdom.——Looking toward the same supremacy Paul elsewhere speaks of the risen Christ as "the first-fruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15: 25).

The ultimate end of all these sublime facts of his life-history and manifold relations, is that in all things whatever he may be chief—first and foremost—supreme above all.

With this accumulation of terms and figures signifying Christ's supremacy, the apostle seems to have reached the point of consummation beyond which no human language or conception can go. At this point, therefore, it became important to remind his readers that this supremacy by no means exalts the Son in any respect above the Eternal Father. Rather, it is due to the good pleasure of the Father that all this fullness of power, of dignity, of supremacy as to the church and as to the whole scheme of redemption, is made to dwell in Christ.

In this v. 19, the English reader will notice that the words "*the Father*," are in italics—to indicate, not emphasis, but the omission of this word in the original. This omission is a noticeable, not to say, a remarkable fact. It legitimately raises the question—What is the purposed subject, or nominative, of the verb "dwell"?——Some critics—(*e. g.*, Ellicott) argue strenuously that the subject of the verb is "all fullness," so that it should read—"In whom all fullness was well pleased to dwell." His reasons for this construction are mainly—(*a.*) The fact that the words, "The Father," are not here, while "all fullness" is:—(*b.*) That it is very harsh to make the two infinitive clauses—"to dwell" and "to reconcile" (v. 20) depend in the same way upon this verb with the word "Father" for its subject:—(*c.*) That in Col. 2: 9 we certainly have "all fullness" the subject of this same verb "dwell."

Over against these considerations and abundantly sustaining our authorized version, "The Father was well pleased that all fullness should dwell in Christ," stand the following points: (*a.*) It is violently harsh to attribute to "all fullness" the "good pleasure"—the benevolent choice—to dwell in Christ. (*b.*) The nature of the case demands that this dwelling of "all fullness" in Christ should be ascribed to the good pleasure of the Father. (*c.*) Finally, New Testament usage of these words is entirely decisive. The noun "good pleasure," * and the corresponding verb "well pleased," † are both in an immense majority of cases applied to the Father, and very often to the Father in reference to the Son. This fact not only settles the present question, but fully accounts for the omission of the word "Father." The usage is so strong, so nearly universal, as to render it entirely unnecessary to write the word "Father." Observant readers of the New Testament could not possibly think of any other subject to the verb here except "the Father." Notice these cases: "This

* εὐδοκια. † εὐδοκεω.

is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," said at his baptism, and again at his transfiguration. Other similar cases of this verb "well pleased," with God for its subject, may be seen: Matt. 12: 18; Luke 12: 32; 1 Cor. 1: 21 and 10: 5, and Gal. 1: 15; Heb. 10: 6, 8, 38, and 2 Pet. 1: 17. In a similar way the noun "good pleasure" is used of God: Matt. 11: 26, and Luke 2: 14 and 10: 21, and Eph. 1: 5, 9, and Phil. 2: 13, and 2 Thess. 1: 11. ——Such an array of cases of usage is overwhelmingly decisive. Yet it may fitly be added that in Paul's presentation of Christ's supremacy, this is the appropriate place to bring in his relations to the Father, and to say that it was due to *his* good pleasure that in his Son, now become incarnate, all this fullness should dwell.

Yet further it was the Father's good pleasure by him to reconcile all things—on earth and in heaven—unto him, he having made peace by the blood of his cross. That blood availed for the pardon of the penitent and believing of our race, because so it pleased the Father; it also availed by its moral power (the Divine Spirit being in it and with it) to reconcile rebellious hearts to obedience and love. Thus the great elements and agencies requisite for the salvation of rebel men were provided by Christ when he made peace through the blood of his cross.

Yet even these truths, magnificent and far reaching though they are, have not exhausted the treasures of great thought embosomed in this passage. Thus far we have taken no special account of the stress laid upon "*all things*" ("reconciling *all things* unto himself"), nor upon the particular specification, "whether things in earth or things in heaven." Here let it be observed that "things in earth" come legitimately first in order; for obviously Christ's blood shed on the cross takes effect first and primarily upon lost men—sinners of our fallen race.—Note further, that the word "reconcile" has, as we well know, a very special adaptation to rebellious men. "God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5: 18–20). This may account for the choice of this word to express the entire range and sweep of that moral power which goes forth from Christ's redemptive work; first reclaiming out of our fallen race "a great multitude that no man can number," and then sending forth a moral power, originating in these developments of God's eternal and infinite love, that shall pervade the intelligent universe, reaching "things in heaven" as well as "things in earth." These secondary influences, going forth from Christ's redemption of lost men might have been expressed by some other word than "reconcile," if they had been spoken of by themselves—*i. e.*, if their results on our fallen race had not been so entirely in the foreground to shape the comprehensive phrase which should include both.

The real sense of this passage is not exhausted till we have developed from it the sublime truth that a moral power is to go forth from Christ's redemptive work which shall far outtravel the narrow limits of our fallen humanity, revealing so much of God before the intelligent universe—put here as "things in heaven"—

as shall bind them in bonds of everlasting love, obedience, adoration, praise, to the eternal throne, and shut off (supposably) the moral possibility of other lapses from virtue, analogous to what heaven saw in the fallen angels and to what earth has seen in fallen man. The words of Paul (Eph. 1: 10) seem to reach out to a result not less grand and comprehensive than this: "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in earth, even in him." All things are to be brought under his supreme Headship. To the moral universe, to all the unfallen, and to this fallen race so far as his cross avails to redeem and reclaim, he becomes the One Infinite Head, the Fountain and Source of moral power which shall be Peace to all heaven as it has been to the earth—to all unfallen races, as to this fallen race.

In treating this passage, Ellicott, a critic never otherwise than careful, judicious, reverent, says: "This and no less than this it does say, that the eternal and incarnate Son is the *causa medians* [the intermediate agent] by which the absolute totality of created things shall be restored into its primal harmony with its Creator —a declaration more specifically unfolded in the following clause. More than this it does not say, and where God is silent, it is not for man to speak (see Eph. 1: 10)."——"*How* the reconciliation of Christ affects the spiritual world, whether by the annihilation of the *posse peccare* [power to sin], or by the infusion of a more perfect knowledge (Eph. 3: 10), or (less probably) by some restorative application to the fallen spiritual world, we know not, and we dare not speculate. This, however, we may fearlessly assert —that the efficacy of the sacrifice of the Eternal Son is infinite and limitless; that it extends to all things in earth and heaven, and that it is the blessed medium by which peace is wrought between God and his creatures, whether angelic, human; animate, or inanimate (Rom. 8: 19)."

The point which Ellicott suggests as "less probable,"—viz., "some restorative application to the fallen spiritual world"—should not be ignored. Inquiring minds will ask it—ask it earnestly,—What, on this point, can be inferred from this passage?

First and most obvious, on the face of the passage, is the fact that the specifications—"things in earth and things in heaven" —leave out "*hell*"—pass in ominous silence "the place prepared for the devil and his angels"—that place to which the unreclaimed of earth are doomed—for their "eternal punishment." With the greatest ease Paul might have included by name that apostate angel race, and also the unsaved of our fallen human family—if the inditing Spirit had bidden him do so, or had even permitted it. But those fallen ones are *not* included. Is it safe for us to assume the responsibility of affirming what the inspired apostle does not dare affirm—what, coming to this point; saying every thing else but this; standing in thought where, to affirm this, if true, would have been supremely to his purpose, he yet does in fact pass with most ominous silence?

The secondary consideration—upon which there can be no occasion to enlarge or expand, is that the Scriptures most emphatically affirm the absolute eternity of the punishment, both of fallen angels and of those of our race who reject the offered gospel and perish in their unbelief. "He that believeth not the Son *shall not see life*, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3: 36).

21. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled:
22. In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight:
23. If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

Specific application to the Colossian brethren of the great gospel truths above presented. This marvelous power of reconciliation is fallen upon them.——The question, *Who* hath reconciled—whether Paul ascribes this to God or to Christ—may admit of some doubt; but the considerations strongly favor the reference to God to whom the reconciling in v. 20 should be specially ascribed.——The object, viz., to present them pure, blameless, above reproach, is the doctrine of Scripture every-where (*e. g.*, Eph. 5: 26, 27).——In v. 23, This result will be reached in your case, if in very deed ye continue firm in the faith ye have embraced;—a caution against being seduced away.——"Preached to every creature"—does not assume that all the world had then heard the gospel, but rather that it was preached indiscriminately to all—Jews and Gentiles; none being excluded as not coming within the pale of its offered blessings.

24. Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

This passage seems to say that in some sense, the afflictions of Christ for his people are deficient; leave something lacking and behind, which Paul rejoices to fill up, in his flesh. Here several questions of profound interest are sprung upon us; *e. g.*, What are these afflictions of Christ? How came they to be deficient in amount for their purpose? And how do Paul's bodily sufferings avail to make good this deficiency?

These points assume a very peculiar interest from the fact that they have been thought by some to bear upon the atonement made by Christ for sin. If so, they must throw light on the *nature* of that atonement, and particularly the nature of the sufferings by which it is made. If Jesus did not bear himself *all* the suffering necessary for all purposes of atonement, and if consequently there remained a deficiency which Paul by his sufferings

could make good, then, for aught that appears, other Christians besides Paul may also contribute their quota by suffering in their flesh; and a yet more pregnant consequence must be, that the atonement is *not* made by Christ alone and only, and we are driven to the conclusion that sacrifice, blood and death, are not vital elements in the atonement; also that a *divine* Christ is not essential; and hence we must find its vital forces either in the afflictions, persecutions, hard labors, which are the cost of gospel work; or in the sympathy of benevolent souls for the miseries of sin and sinners.——Now if such results hang suspended upon the interpretation of this passage, the groundwork of its interpretation ought to be laid with great care and thoroughness.

The fundamental position in this groundwork is that the *passage has no reference whatever to the atonement.* It says nothing about atonement, and therefore does not even hint that Paul contributed toward filling out its requisite sufferings; consequently it throws not the least light upon the nature of those sufferings which are represented as vital in the atonement.

1. To sustain this position it is only necessary to show that the Scriptures never use this word for "affliction"* to signify the sufferings and death of Christ; never use it in reference to the atonement nor in any way as the ground for the forgiveness of sin. The Greek word is used abundantly in the New Testament (forty-five times) and always in the sense of "tribulation," persecution—almost exclusively for the sufferings which befall the people of God through the hostility even to violence, of God's enemies. The following standard cases of its usage may serve for illustration and for proof of the point here made:

"In the world ye shall have *tribulation*" (John 16: 33). "God delivered Joseph out of all his *tribulations*" [afflictions] (Acts 7: 10). "They that were scattered abroad by the *tribulation* ["persecution"] that arose about Stephen" (Acts 11: 19). ——"That through much *tribulation*, we must enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14: 22). "Witnessing in every city that bonds and *tribulations* ["afflictions"] abide [await] me" (Acts 20: 23). ——"Faint not at my *tribulations* for you which are your glory" (Eph. 3: 13.)

2. These sufferings are distinctly said to be for Christ's body's sake—the church. But the atonement is made for individual sinners—not for the church as a whole—a "body." Therefore these afflictions are not the sufferings which constitute the atonement. The atonement is for the pardon of sin, not for the building up of the church directly; not for the preaching of the gospel; not for any thing in behalf of the church which incurs "tribulation." Hence we must infer that this passage has no reference whatever to the atonement inasmuch as the Scriptures always locate this in the blood and death of Christ.

3. It is never safe to interpret figurative language without due regard to the nature of the figure, and to its bearing upon

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the sense. Here the figure is—The church under the symbol of a human body, of which Christ is the Head. The sympathy between the head and all else of the body is simply perfect. Not only is it true in general that "if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it;" but it is pre-eminently true in particular that if the body suffers, the head must sympathize intensely.

Now the age of Paul was one of persecution and tribulation. Jesus had said to his disciples—"In the world ye shall have *tribulation*"—the same word as here ["affliction"]. Meeting the man who early led off in these persecutions, Jesus accosted him—"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou *me?*" It is not strange therefore that this same Saul should long remember that persecuting the church is persecuting Christ; that he who smites the body smites the head also; so that consequently that sacred, sympathizing Head feels every pain which his body—the church—feels in her gospel work for his name. Nor is it strange that Paul, remembering ever the cruel wrong he had done to his Savior in persecuting his people unto death should rejoice in being permitted to change sides—to place himself among Christ's persecuted people and lay bare his own bosom to the hottest shafts of torture and death for his Savior's sake. How grandly did he put his flesh into this conflict of pain, imprisonment, torture, death—all in behalf of Christ's body, the church—that he might supplement what was behind of the afflictions of Christ for his body's sake! When Paul saw there was more to be endured for Christ's dear body, the church; how joyfully did he spring forward into the deadly breach and take the arrows of death to his bosom!

This interpretation adjusts itself to the figure and to the facts of the passage, and therefore must be the true one. Moreover, the reader may find confirmation of these views in passages like the following: "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us" (2 Cor. 1: 5);—"That I may know the fellowship of his sufferings" (Phil. 3: 10);—"Rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings" (1 Pet. 4: 13).

25. Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God;

26. *Even* the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

27. To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

The true sense of these leading words—"dispensation," "mystery," long time hidden, but then recently revealed—appears in Eph. 3: 2–9, to which the reader is referred. Paul seems never weary of this theme—the wonderful breadth of the divine plan of redemption, long apparently restricted to the ancient covenant people, but in this latter time, bursting those narrow limits and

casting abroad its magnificent wealth of blessings upon the whole Gentile world. It was Paul's high honor and his enrapturing delight to have had this dispensation of an unlimited, unrestricted gospel of world-wide salvation, intrusted first of all to himself. That which was so long a mystery (a thing not revealed) is now "made manifest to his saints."

In the phrase—"the riches of the glory of this mystery"—(very Pauline in form), it is of some consequence to have definite ideas. Is the emphatic word "riches" or is it "glory"? Does he mean the glorious riches, or the rich glory? And what precisely *is* this "glory"? To this last question Paul virtually makes answer—*Christ himself*. He is the "glory" involved in this old "mystery" now made manifest. He is *the* glory, the superlative richness of which, God would fain make known among the Gentiles, and make it known as being truly designed for them not less than for Jews. Moreover, the vital elements which make Jesus Christ pre-eminently *the* glory—the consummation of all that is excellent, precious, grand—are his transforming power upon human souls unto purity and blessedness, and the fullness of God's grace to men which Christ's manifestation reveals. These elements conduce to make Jesus Christ in his people "the hope of glory"—the source, the fountain whence their purity and blessedness forever flow.

28. Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

29. Whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

Bearing responsibilities so momentous, a mission so sublime, Paul gives himself to the preaching of this gospel and would fain have his Colossian brethren understand well what he preaches; how he admonishes and warns; and what he holds ever in heart as his ultimate aim. He longs to bring every man to the high attainment of perfection in Christ. He would have them bear Christ's image, not partially but perfectly—would have them dead to sin, not in some respects only but in all—not with divided but with perfect heart—not in some points of living practice but in all. For this he labors, and with the sustaining conviction that, for these results, God through his Spirit, works within him mightily. This sustaining conviction assumed fundamentally that such high aims in holy living were in the very plan of God.

CHAPTER II.

Paul wishes they might know how deeply his soul agonizes for them, though they have never seen each other (v. 1); the burden of his prayer in their behalf (v. 2, 3); fearing they might be beguiled from their yet steadfast faith (v. 4, 5); having received Christ, so let them walk in him, being fully established (v. 6, 7); renewed caution lest any man rob them of the true gospel and its blessings by putting something else before Christ who has all fullness and in whom they are entirely complete, he being supreme in all power (v. 8–10); in whom is the true spiritual circumcision (v. 11), and the spiritual power of the true baptism (v. 12); who raises the spiritually dead to new life (v. 13); he has canceled the Mosaic ritual which bore against Gentiles (v. 14); and has triumphed over all other powers, angelic or otherwise (v. 15). Therefore let no man judge them in the matter of eating, drinking, or the Mosaic festivals, these being only a shadow of which Christ is the body (v. 16, 17); further specification of the beguiling errors against which he warns them (v. 18); which dishonor Christ the Head (v. 19); closing with another protest against those delusions (v. 20–23).

1. For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and *for* them at Laodicea, and *for* as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;

2. That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;

3. In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

"Conflict" here is the strong word * from which we take our English word agony. What he had heard concerning them had deeply moved his soul to solicitude and prayer in their behalf, although they had never seen each other in the flesh.

He prays that they may be comforted; be made strong in the bonds of mutual love; and may progress even to a full experience of the blessedness of assured intellectual conviction, particularly unto the knowledge of the mystery of God—that is, of Christ, in whom lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.—— The improved text (Tischendorf) omits the words "And of the Father, and"—leaving it—"The mystery of God, Christ,"—in the sense, viz., of Christ. Having spoken first of the mystery as that of God, he adds the word "Christ" for explanation—I mean the mystery concerning Christ. The long unrevealed truth concerning the promised Christ might indeed be said in general to be a

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"mystery of God," yet was more precisely of Christ.——All the wealth of wisdom and knowledge which God proposed to reveal was stored in him. He had it all.

4. And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.

5. For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

What I have just said is to warn you against being beguiled by false reasoning, put in plausible words. Consider that I am with you in thought and heart, and am rejoiced, for I seem to see you marching on with steadfast step and unbroken rank like dauntless soldiers in line of battle (the sense of the word "order")—all in the firmness of faith that has Christ for its object.

6. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk ye in him:

7. Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

Having once received Jesus Christ as truthfully taught you, see that ye live in him, strongly rooted, firmly built upon him as your foundation, ever strong in the faith even as ye have been taught. ——"Abundant in thanksgiving," in this connection, suggests that joyous gratitude and thanksgiving to God are elements of the Christian's strength; and moreover, that true faith in Jesus supplies unbounded occasion for both. They needed the help of no new notions of Christ to make their religion joyous. Religious experiences in Christ that are thoroughly soul-satisfying—that fill the heart with peace, with joy and with perpetual thanksgiving to God, no sensible man is under any temptation to let go in hope of something better.

8. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

9. For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

"Spoil you"—not in the sense of taking your good things from you, but rather of taking *yourselves*, bodily;—making you his booty. This apostle of delusion, spoken of as one man, sought nothing less than drawing his victims, body and soul, into his snares. Christian men will counterwork his agencies the better if they know his tactics; so Paul describes them. A philosophy, the very essence and soul of which is vain deceit, for Paul's words couple these ideas closely—a deceptive philosophy

which corresponds with and works upon the traditions of men and the elements of worldliness, and is not at all according to Christ.

The reader will notice that so far as defined here, this new doctrine has two characteristic elements; (*a.*) Like Jewish Pharisaism, it followed human tradition; (*b.*) and like all unsanctified souls it loved and introduced worldly elements and not Christ. Yet Christ is all sufficient and has never the least need of being supplemented by such aid, for in him dwells all the fullness of divinity,* even in his incarnate state. The human person, Jesus, appearing as man among men, did truly manifest the fullness of God—the fullness of God's wisdom; the fullness of God's love; the fullness of his spiritual power to save—so that no man, once accepting him, could by any possibility need any thing more or other than Jesus.

10. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

Since Christ has such fullness, all your wants must be perfectly supplied in him—a truth so vital that Paul is not content to leave it to be inferred, but solemnly affirms it. In him ye are *made full*—filled with all most blessed things—wisdom, moral strength, divine love—so that nothing more can be desired.——It was pertinent to add just here that Jesus is supreme above all the highest orders of created beings—those which Paul often speaks of under the names which are here—"principalities and powers." (See 1: 16 and 2: 15 and Eph. 1: 21.)

These seducing doctrines had a place for the worship of angels, and apparently, for their Mediatorship—probably under the Romish idea of the virgin-mother as an intermediate agency between Christ and men. Hence the point put here—Christ above all "principalities and powers," and therefore superseding their aid most entirely.

11. In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

12. Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

13. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

Supposably these apostles of delusion had so much Judaism in their system that they would enforce circumcision upon Gentiles. Hence Paul says to the Colossians:—In Christ ye have

* θεοτητος

the best possible circumcision—one not hand-wrought, but wrought by the Divine Spirit; which puts off the fleshly body in the true spiritual sense—which is a circumcision wrought by Christ, and therefore perfect.——Circumcision is certainly here in its spiritual significance—the discarding and rising above the control of the flesh into the realm of the truly spiritual life.

Verse 12 calls for comment in two lines of inquiry;—the first general; the second very specific: the first expounding the general sense of the passage in its context; the second raising the very specific question whether "buried" as applied here to baptism looks toward its mode of administration and assumes that mode to have been immersion.——Postponing remarks upon this second point for the present, let us consider the first.

Beyond all question Paul has spoken (v. 11) of circumcision in its spiritual sense and in this sense only. A circumcision not hand-wrought but wrought by Christ, and which consisted in removing—putting off—the whole body of fleshly sin—this is simply spiritual circumcision and nothing else.——Still further, it can not be doubted that this allusion to circumcision suggested baptism, this being the Christian rite analogous to Jewish circumcision; nor can it be denied that baptism as well as circumcision is here in its spiritual sense and in this sense only. Particularly is this shown in the rising [resurrection] said to be "with Christ"—*i. e.*, analogous to his resurrection; and moreover, being through faith in the energy of God who raised him [Christ] from the dead.——Pausing here a moment upon this phrase, translated, "the faith of the operation of God"—let it be noted that our English version is quite literal, the Greek word for "operation" having the sense of *energy, power*—this being the Greek word, energy, which we have transferred in the same sense to our tongue. But the question as to its exact sense is whether we shall read—faith *in* the power of God—*i. e.*, the soul's confidence in God's power to save; or faith *wrought by* God's power. If the latter be the right construction it would go strongly to prove that faith as thought of here is rather wrought in us than exercised by us.——The former construction—faith *resting in* God's power, I take to be the true sense, this being the usage of the Scriptures in grammatical constructions of this sort—viz., the genitive following the word "faith." This always expresses that *in which* the soul by faith believes. *E. g.*, in Acts 3 : 16, "Through the faith *of* his name," means faith exercised *in* his name—not faith wrought *by* his name. In Phil. 1 : 27, "Striving together for the faith *of* the gospel," means faith exercised *in* the gospel. In 2 Thess. 2 : 13, "Through belief of the truth"—is certainly equivalent to belief *in* the truth.——The sense of the whole clause, therefore, is: Ye rise with Christ by the resurrection which is out of death in sin unto spiritual life, and so is *through your faith in* that divine energy put forth by God in raising Christ from the dead. The Scriptures very commonly speak of Christ as raised from the dead by the Spirit of God.

Here it becomes not only important but vital to the full understanding of our passage to notice that the New Testament writers make great use of this analogy between the dying and rising again of Christ on the one hand, and on the other, the dying of his people to sin and their rising to new spiritual life under the working of the same power that raised Christ.

This analogy has its roots apparently in those words of Christ (John 5: 21, 24, 25): "The Son quickeneth" [giveth spiritual life to] "whom he will." "He that believeth on him that sent me is passed from death unto life." "The hour is coming and *now is* when the dead [in sin] shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live."——This can be nothing else but the spiritual raising of spiritually dead souls, to life.

The points of this analogy are at once clear, striking, instructive. Christ died to earth; his people die to earthliness: Christ is raised to a new sphere of glorious life in heaven; they to a new sphere of Christian life, first on earth—ultimately in heaven.

The dying of Christ carries in itself a mighty moral power toward the corresponding death of his people to sin: his rising from death to glory inspires his people to faith and hope, first for their Christian life here; last, for their similar resurrection to the heavenly life hereafter. Thus, not in one aspect of this analogy only, but in several, it was exceedingly pertinent and forcible. Hence it should not surprise us that, taking its rise in those memorable words of the Lord (John 5: 21, 24, 25) it should often appear in the writings of the apostles.——It is expanded with remarkable fullness and its main points reiterated, in Rom. 6: 2–13: "How shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein?" "Dead to sin" by our solemn profession; by our most sacred vows; by every consideration weighty upon Christian souls—for this death is in its nature moral, not physical—how can we go on to sin again?——"Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" *i. e.*, were most solemnly consecrated, pledged, to live only in and for Christ and to die thoroughly unto sin and all earthliness, even as he died to earth. This is the New Testament sense of being "*baptized into.*" So the "fathers were all baptized *into Moses*" (1 Cor. 10: 2); so Paul would *not* baptize converts into his own name (1 Cor. 1: 13); so he declares (1 Cor. 12: 13), "By one Spirit we are all baptized *into* one body"—one and the same church of Christ.——Still onward in this, Rom. 6: "With him we are buried by baptism into death"—solemnly committed to die to all sin, even as Christ died as to his earthly life; and this to the end that the other side of the analogy might be wrought out in our experience—viz., "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory" [power] "of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life"—our new life corresponding to Christ's in the heavenly world. So onward, this passage turns this analogy over and over: Christians "planted," first in the likeness of Christ's death; then in the likeness of his resurrec-

tion (v. 5). "If we be dead with Christ, we believe we shall also live with him" (v. 8). "Reckon ye yourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus our Lord" (v. 11).

Similarly in the context of our passage. In v. 13: "Ye being dead in your sins hath he quickened" [raised to new life] together with him [Christ]—*i. e.*, even as he raised Christ to life. Also v. 20: "If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?" and (chap. 3: 1-3): "If ye be risen with Christ (*i. e.*, to this new life toward God), then seek ye those things which are above," etc.

Numerous other passages in the epistles must be passed here, noting only their place, so that the reader can refer to them: *e. g.*, Rom. 8: 10, 11, and 2 Cor. 13: 4, and Phil. 3: 10, and 2 Tim. 2: 11, and 1 Pet. 2: 24. The reader will find that not one of these passages alludes at all to baptism. The great analogy above explained was not built on baptism at all.

This must suffice for the general exposition of our passage.

I come now to speak briefly of the specific question whether "buried with him in baptism" looks toward the mode of its administration, and shows that mode to have been immersion.

My readers know that these commentaries are not designed for the exhaustive or even extended discussion of controversial questions. Such questions come under notice here only so far as the laws of language apply to the just exposition of the words.

"Buried with him in baptism" here, should be studied in connection with its only parallel passage, Romans 6: 3, 4: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

On our now pending question—whether in these two passages Paul's thought is upon the mode of baptism as immersion, so that this "burying in baptism" means immersion in baptismal waters—I suggest the following considerations:

1. The drift of the whole context in both passages (Col. 2: 12 and Rom. 6: 3, 4) is upon the spiritual, not the material or physical sense of baptism—upon its spiritual significance, not upon its forms and modes of administration.

2. The *burying* by baptism is abundantly accounted for in the fact that the great analogy has for both parties (Christ and his people) death on its first side, and on its second side has (equally for both) a resurrection. But to make the idea of a resurrection in the case of Christians more clear and striking, they are thought of not only as dead, but as *buried*. Burial naturally precedes resurrection. The object, therefore, in pushing the Christian's death to sin to the extent (figuratively considered) of a burial is to make the analogy more clear and forcible when, on the other side, their case is compared with that of Christ in the point of a

resurrection. This fully accounts for burial, so that no other reason need be assigned or can be reasonably. That in the apostle's thought, 'being buried," in this figure, is not burial under the waters of baptism, but is being buried out of this world preparatory to rising to a new life in and through Christ, is certified to us beyond possible mistake by his own words below (v. 20): "As though living in the world;" for these words show that this burying has taken them out of the world.

3. On the second side of this analogy, there is not the least hint looking toward baptism—nothing about being lifted out of the water, or coming up out of it. The second side touches nothing whatever but the figure of the resurrection.——This omission of all reference to emerging from the water, after the supposed immersion in it, goes strongly against the supposition of any thought whatever of immersion as the mode. It certainly shows that the imagery in these passages is not built upon the mode of baptism by immersion, but *is* built solely upon the analogy above explained, the second side of which is nothing more or less than resurrection—*i. e.*, of Christ from his grave and of his people from their death in sin to a new life corresponding to that of Christ.

4. If, when Paul wrote (in Rom. 6: 4), "We are buried with him by baptism into or unto death," his mind was upon immersion, and if he really spake of burial under the baptismal waters, what could he have meant by being immersed in water *unto death?* There is but one legitimate meaning in these words—viz., immersing the subject *till he is dead!*——Now I can not conceive how Paul, with his mind fully upon immersion in water as being *the* baptism he was speaking of, could possibly say, "baptism unto death." I infer, therefore, that baptism by immersion was not in his mind at all.

5. So in our passage (Col. 2: 12) the thing that lies over against burial in baptism is *not* rising out of the baptismal waters, but *is* the resurrection to a new spiritual life through faith, corresponding to Christ's resurrection by the power of the Holy Ghost. That is, the second side of the great analogy shows, not that water baptism by immersion is in Paul's mind, but that this burying is spoken of here only as lying over against a resurrection—not out of water, but out of real death.

6. The fact that in a large majority of the passages which are built upon this great analogy, there is no reference whatever to baptism, shows that baptism is not the groundwork of this conception, and therefore much more does it show that the *mode* of its administration does not by any means underlie this great analogy.

These brief heads of thought, built as it seems to me upon just laws of interpretation, must suffice, without further expanding the argument.

14. Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was

against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

15. *And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

This "handwriting" can be no other than the ceremonial institutions given through Moses, now made obsolete through Christ. They were on record in the Old Testament Scriptures, in the form of "handwriting" so called here, perhaps to suggest the facility of "blotting out." They were "against us," Gentiles, inasmuch as they discriminated sharply against all Gentiles. Christ took that "handwriting" out of the way of Gentiles as an obstacle to their conversion and welcome reception into his church—nailed it to his cross, putting an end to its binding force. The cross stands for salvation to all, Jew or Gentile, irrespective of nationality, and so it terminated forever the special prerogatives of Jews.

The "principalities and powers" of v. 15 are spiritual beings of high rank, the terms being used of either good beings (Eph. 1: 21) or bad (Eph. 6: 12)—the question which, in any given case, the context must determine. Here, the context proves that they are bad—the devil and his angels.

The word translated "having spoiled" means strictly to *cast off* as a garment, here in the kindred sense of casting away from himself—as good men repel the tempter—the reference being to the final triumph of Jesus over all the powers of hell in their oft-repeated assaults upon him while he dwelt in human flesh, "tempted in all points as we are." In every conflict with those powers, Jesus conquered and reached his last, final victory on his cross. Rising a mighty conqueror over all the powers of hell, he emphatically and boldly declared his triumph.

The reader will notice that v. 14 strikes at the ritualistic Judaism of those apostles of error; v. 15 at their playing into the hands of "principalities and powers"—other and mightier than human.

16. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath *days:*

17. Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ.

"Therefore"—the Mosaic system having been abrogated—allow no man to judge you, as a matter of conscience, of moral right or wrong—in the point of eating or drinking, things clean or unclean; nor "in respect of an *holy day*"—this word referring to the three annual festivals. The new moons also had their ritual services.——The word for "Sabbath" is here in the plural form, and therefore should naturally include not only the weekly Jewish Sabbath, but the Sabbatic year—each seventh—and the jubilee—the fiftieth. The plural form of Sabbath (Greek) is sometimes

used for the weekly Sabbath only, leaving it doubtful whether Paul designed to include all the Mosaic Sabbaths.

From this passage some have inferred that Paul abrogated all Sabbath, classing the entire institution with other Mosaic ordinances which Christianity supplanted and annulled. But this goes quite beyond Paul's words or his meaning either; for the things he would abrogate are "the handwriting of ordinances," characteristically Jewish and naturally hostile to Gentile equality in the privileges of the gospel.——Moreover, the Jewish Sabbath as interpreted by the Pharisees and as imposed under their teaching demanded far more than Moses ever did—so much more that Jesus set himself strongly against those Pharisaic interpretations and impositions. He would discard *such* Sabbath laws, but he certainly recognized the perpetual obligation of a true Sabbath.

The reference to "drinks" suggests that ascetic practices in this respect had gone quite beyond the Mosaic law.

All these Mosaic ceremonial services foreshadowed the coming Christ; were only the shadow of which Christ is the body. Hence the "body" having now come, the prophetic shadows have served their purpose and should cease.

18. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

19. And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

"Beguile" translates a Greek word which looks to the award made by the judge in the ancient games and signifies an award *adverse* to their rights. ——Let no one beguile you of set purpose. The Greek word for "voluntary" does not qualify "humility" (as our authorized version has it erroneously) but the word for "no one"—thus indicating a deliberate intention on his part to cheat them out of their reward.——Assumed humility, coupled with angel-worship, are the means used for their purpose. Angel-worship seems to have included angel-mediatorship as well. This, like the mediatorship of the Virgin Mary, was probably advocated on the ground that God is too high and too pure to be approached save through some interposed Mediator other than Jesus. So it seemed to them very modest and very humble to put the angels into this service.——In the clause—"Intruding into those things which he hath not seen," the word for the negative ("not") is of doubtful authority. Accepting it, we have the sense—pushing beyond their real knowledge into realms of profitless speculation (*e. g.*, about the angels). On the other hand, rejecting it, we must interpret;—bringing every thing to the judgment of the senses; demanding some tangible Mediator between themselves and the invisible God.——That the ruling motive was fleshly, earthly—in

the spirit, not of genuine humility but of pride that puffeth up—is plainly declared.

Their radical defect—the diverging point of all their heresy—was that they did not hold fast upon Christ the Head, from whom flows down all the spiritual power that breathes vital moral force through the members of his spiritual body, the church. This figure—the Head, Christ, in his relation to the bodily members—his people—is the same which appears in Eph. 4: 15.

20. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,

21. (Touch not; taste not; handle not;

22. Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?

23. Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh.

This analogy—dead, and so severed utterly from all worldliness of life and spirit, even as Christ died from earth—we have discussed fully above under v. 11–13. Noticeably here, Paul assumes that they were not to think of themselves as yet "living in the world." Why, he asks, should ye allow yourselves to be dogmatized over—subjected to the imposition of human ordinances—just as if ye were still living in this world, when really ye are dead to all that is properly of this world?——The clause in parenthesis—"Touch not; taste not; handle not," etc., is given as a specimen of the dogmas which those false teachers would impose. The clause "which are to perish with the using"—is Paul's own comment upon them, indicating their worthlessness.—"After the commandments and doctrines of men" is said of the ordinances (v. 20) and should be read in close connection with that verse.

"Which things have a semblance of wisdom"—and therefore may at first thought, seem very religious. "Will-worship"—self-imposed, volunteered—as if in the true love of worship, and in great apparent humility, pretending to have such a sense of unworthiness that they could not dare approach God save through the mediation of angels.——"Neglecting the body," is not so strong as Paul's word which means—unsparing treatment of the body—not sparing it from self-imposed suffering; pushing their ascetic notions to the extent of self-torture, and so appearing to crucify the flesh. But Paul condemns this because it is self-imposed; because not required by any law of God; because its real root was not humility but pride; and because it had in it nothing honorable or worthy or useful as meeting the legitimate demands of our physical nature.

CHAPTER III.

On being risen with Christ (v. 1–4); consequent duty of putting to death fleshly, sinful passions which incur God's wrath (v. 5–7); sins named again which should be discarded (v. 8); lying specially included (v. 9); putting off all that pertained to the old life and putting on the new, renewed after God and in Christ (v. 10, 11); specifying what should be put on (v. 12–14), and also the graces of the heart (v. 15); holding and teaching the word of Christ in connection with Christian song and much thanksgiving (v. 16, 17); duties of wives and husbands (v. 18, 19); of children and fathers (v. 20, 21); also of servants (v. 22–25).

1. If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.
2. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.
3. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.
4. When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

"Risen with Christ" follows the thought of the passage (2: 12), using the same verb and in the same form of it. By their Christian profession, and hopefully, in fact also, they were risen from their old state of death in sin, even as Christ rose from the grave to his new life in heavenly glory; yea more—the analogy is carried through so as to assume that they have risen into that new sphere of heavenly life, though yet on earth bodily. Therefore, let them live consistently with their professions and with the new relations they bear to Christ; let them seek the things above where Christ is sitting at God's right hand—seek them, as is soon explained, in studious thought and earnest love; live in them.——So (v. 2); put mind and heart upon those things above, not on things of earth; for ye have professedly, and (it should be) truly died to sin and to worldly things; the life-fountain of your activity, altogether invisible to the world, lies "with Christ in God"—"with Christ," in the sense of being like his, hidden as his is hidden; and in God as the infinite sphere of all your life, your love, your aspirations, your voluntary activities.

The world will see the nature and sources of your life when Christ shall appear and before all the universe shall recognize you as his people. Then your now unseen relations to Christ will be disclosed and the blindest worldliness can not fail to see why ye are living above the world while yet living in it.

5. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the

earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

6. For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

7. In the which ye also walked sometime, when ye lived in them.

The word "mortify," taken literally, translates well the Greek word which means put to death; destroy its life-power.——"Members" is the remarkable word of this passage. Carrying out to its full extent—not to say forcing to its extreme literal sense—the conception of human flesh as the seat and source of sin—it conceives of special forms of sin as being severally members of the body—as if the hand were one sin; the foot another; the lustful eye another, etc. Paul has elsewhere used similar language, though slightly less bold in its figure: "If ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Rom. 8: 13); "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts"—the last word explaining what he means by the "flesh" (Gal. 5: 24).——They are said to be "upon the earth" in antithesis with living in heaven—with thought and heart on things above.

The particular forms of sin here enumerated (v. 5) scarcely need exposition. "Fornication and uncleanness" are violations of the seventh commandment. "Inordinate affection," in Greek one word, is lustfulness, strong sensual propensities, from which "evil concupiscence" is scarcely distinguishable, since this must mean passions of evil sort.——That covetousness should be declared to be "idolatry," and condemned because it is such, is at once fearfully true in its nature, and should be startling to the dullest moral sense. Covetousness gives the heart's love and homage to Mammon—to Gold and its supposed equivalents—even as the idol-worshiper gives his heart to Moloch or to Jupiter. The language of his heart is—Gold, be thou my God!—Gold, I give thee my labor, my love, my very heart, my life!—If this be not idolatry, what can be? If this does not put gold in the place God ought to hold, what can?

On account of these sins, God's wrath *comes* (present tense)—comes now and must ever come.——The words "upon the children of disobedience" are of doubtful textual authority (omitted by Tischendorf, Alford). The omission, however, could not change Paul's meaning. His corresponding passage (Eph. 5: 6) has these words.—In your former ungodly life ye practiced these sins and gave your heart full scope in their indulgence. So much had Christianity wrought in them toward a heavenly life on earth.

8. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

But now, in contrast with that former life, put ye off (imperative)—the sense being, not ye *do put* off, but *do it*.——The first three are passions of the soul, while "blasphemy" in this connection probably refers to speaking evil of fellow-men; as filthy, foul-mouthed language certainly does. All these are most unsuitable to souls new-born to God.

9. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

10. And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

11. Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: but Christ *is* all, and in all.

Lie not one to another, having put off—seeing or since ye have put off—the old man with all that belongs to him. Lying toward fellow-men belongs to the old life—not at all to the new one.

Of the new man two descriptive points appear: (*a*) He is renewed, not precisely *in* knowledge, but *into* [eis], unto better knowledge and a correspondingly better life;—and (*b*) his renewed life is 'according to the image of God" who creates—gives birth to—this new man. It should be noticed that this conception of a new man involves the idea of creation—a *new* creation. This is the figurative conception of the new birth, usually spoken of as "regeneration." So Paul says (2 Cor. 5: 17), "If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation." In its essence this figure appears first in the Old Testament: "Create in me a clean heart" (Psalms 51: 10): "A new heart will I give you" (Ezek. 36: 26).——It should be noticed that this "being renewed" is put in the present tense, not in the past, indicating a process still progressing; not a momentary change completed somewhere in the past. The precise translation is—"Having put on the new man who is *being renewed*—is undergoing continuous renewal unto knowledge," etc. So Paul (2 Cor. 4: 16)—"Our inner man is experiencing renewal day by day"—where the verb is in the present tense and the action it represents is in present progress.——"Renewed unto knowledge"—should legitimately mean not only renewed by means of truth as the instrument used by the Divine Spirit, but renewed *unto the love* of the truth and unto the richer and fuller attainment of this knowledge—a fact of precious significance, and far too little apprehended and appreciated.

This new realm of life knows no caste distinctions of race (Jew or Gentile); or of rituality (on the point of circumcision); or of culture ("barbarian," etc.); or of social condition (as free or enslaved);—all such distinctions disappear forever, and Christ is all and in all. Christ is the same to all; gives his blessings alike to all; knows and makes no discrimination among the lost sons and daughters of our fallen race.

12. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering;

13. Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye.

14. And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

"Putting on" follows the conception (in v. 10) of "putting on the new man," the sense being—cultivate, cherish these moral qualities of character, as it becomes the chosen ones of God who should be holy as they are really beloved—all these considerations heightening the motives which should press them to obey this precept. Cherish, put in exercise, "bowels of mercy"—the singular [mercy] being the approved text—and the bowels being thought of as the seat of all tender affection. "If a man have"—not a "quarrel" but a complaint—a cause or ground of blame against any one. As Christ forgave you, so should ye also forgive. It is remarkable how often this duty is inculcated, enforced by this special motive (because Christ forgives us); and still further enforced by the superadded fact—God will not forgive the unforgiving soul: if ye do not forgive your offending brother, neither will God forgive you. Paul puts the exhortation in its general form (Eph. 4: 32): "Forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you." But no words can make the point more clear and strong than Christ's own; *e. g.*, "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matt. 6: 14, 15). (So also Matt. 18: 21, 22, 35.)

The question of casuistry (we might say, the only one) pertaining to this subject, is this: Is the command *Forgive*, conditioned upon professed repentance? Am I bound to forgive an offender who does not even profess to repent?

On this point it may be said:—(*a*) God never forgives the avowedly unrepentant; and therefore his example does not require this of us;—(*b*) Our Lord seems to assume professed repentance as the condition: "If he trespass, rebuke; if he repent, forgive" (Luke 17: 3). But on the other hand, our Lord insists upon the greatest charity toward an offender who confesses (Luke 17: 4). The Christ-like, loving spirit will be very ready to receive professions of repentance, and to forgive upon the basis of faith and charity. And yet further:—The gentle, loving spirit, as opposed to the retaliating, punishing spirit, is always in order, for it should be remembered, God has said, "Vengeance is mine"—not yours. He never devolves on us the responsibility to avenge personal injuries, beyond what the protection of the public interests may require.

15. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Let the peace which God gives ["peace of God"] bear sway in your heart—a living presence and power there; to which blessed state ye are called, being really but one body of which Christ is the Head; so that there can legitimately be no rival conflicting interests among you. The corrected text gives Christ (rather than "God"):—"Let the peace of *Christ* rule," etc.—"who is our peace" (Eph. 2: 14) and who solemnly bequeathed his peace to his people, saying—"My peace I give unto you" (John 14: 27). The verb "rule" * suggests the guiding and the inspiration which helped the combatants to win their prize, this being the word in use for that service. For such peace and for all its blessedness, how rich should be our thankfulness!

16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

The word of Christ—that which he taught—let it dwell in you richly. "In all wisdom"—should qualify your teaching and admonishing one another, and not the dwelling of Christ's words in you. The punctuation in our authorized version is misleading. Sacred song should be made a vehicle of inspiring truth. The heart's song, unheard of men, makes rich and grateful melody in the ear of God. So Eph. 5: 19: And do all in the love of Jesus' name—out of regard to him—his name and his love being present and effective, not only in all your sacred songs but in all your Christian life.

18. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.

19. Husbands, love *your* wives, and be not bitter against them.

The mutual duties of wives and husbands are less fully developed here than in the Epistle to the Ephesians, the general doctrine, however, being entirely the same. "In the Lord," signifying in the sphere of his presence, of his claims; and on your part, the sphere of love and obedience to his will—it is specially fitting that ye, wives, should yield obedience to your husbands. What was proper before you were "in the Lord" is doubly proper now.

* *βραβευω.*

20. Children, obey *your* parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

21. Fathers, provoke not your children *to anger*, lest they be discouraged.

So of the mutual duties of children and parents. Notice that here (as in Eph. 6: 4) mothers are not named—perhaps omitted because maternal affection may for the most part be relied on to shield mothers against the abuse of parental authority. "Lest they be discouraged"—being so powerless against a father's severity; and this result—disheartening a child from all attempts to please—being so disastrous to both parties. How tenderly watchful against this result should every father be! "Obeying in all things," needs no formal limitation (*e. g.*) to things not opposed to God's will, this exception being really too obvious to need to be made. God could never require or expect the son to obey his earthly father *against* his Heavenly Father.

22. Servants, obey in all things *your* masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God:

23. And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

24. Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

25. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

The duties of Christian servants are put at once clearly and strongly. They should serve, not to please the earthly master but the heavenly:—this to be done heartily, as all service for Christ should always be done:—moreover done as knowing that their reward is sure in the inheritance of the saints in light—just as sure as though they were serving Christ on an earthly throne instead of serving an earthly master at his footstool. God looks at the spirit of obedience, and at nothing else; he rewards upon that basis and upon no other. In the last clause of v. 24, the best textual authorities omit the word "for," reading it simply—"Ye serve the Lord Christ." This carries its own logical significance, with no need of saying "for."

CHAPTER IV.

To masters (v. 1). Exhortation to prayer, especially for the apostle and his associates (v. 2–4); their walk before the ungodly; their speech to be ordered wisely (v. 5, 6); Tychicus and Onesi-

mus, bearing this letter, will report the state of things with Paul and at Rome (v. 7–9); various salutations (v. 10, 11), and especially from Epaphras, first their fellow-citizen, and then their pastor (v. 12, 13); their greetings (v. 14, 15); apostolic letters to be interchanged for the mutual benefit of churches (v. 16); charge to Archippus (v. 17), and the apostle's final salutations (v. 18).

1. Masters, give unto *your* servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

We can see no reason why the critic who divided this epistle into chapters should have drawn a chapter line between the duties of servants and those of masters. On every right principle, this v. 1 ought to have been put at the end of chapter 3.

Justice and equity should rule the master in his whole bearing toward his servants, for his own Master in heaven will hold him to this. He should be aware that his whole treatment of his servants must be reviewed before the higher court.

On the question of the right and the wrong of slavery and the duty of emancipation, Paul simply announced the great principles which should govern both the slave-holder and the law-making power, and then left them upon the conscience to work out their results under all the light of circumstances. It is a fact of history that the gospel did ere long work out emancipation. Its doctrine of universal brotherhood, of equality of rights, of amenability to one common Master in heaven, of rendering to the servant what is just and equal, wrought silently yet rapidly toward this result, and could not possibly rest in any thing short of it.

2. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;

3. Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:

4. That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

It is safe to assume that the burden of prayer upon Paul's own heart is well indicated by his request for the prayers of the Colossian brethren—viz., that God would burst open his prison doors and let him preach; would also open providential doors of access in all directions and give him all boldness to preach Christ in the face of fiercest persecution with never a fear of consequences, and no withholding of the gospel message. It must have been a fearful strain upon his patience to lie there two long years, knowing every day that whole cities and nations were perishing in their heathen darkness, while he would but could not go to them with the light of life. Will the brethren join and help his burdened heart in this prayer?

5. Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.

6. Let your speech *be* always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

We may thank God for giving Paul some leisure to write such epistles. Let his written words stir Christian hearts to duty all down the ages!

Walk in wisdom toward those outside the church. No business, no labor, no service whatsoever, demands wisdom more than this.——On redeeming the time, see Eph. 5: 16. It is here as one of the dictates of Christian wisdom. Buy up golden opportunities; seize them if they come within your reach, as the merchantman buys all best commodities, at the right time, and careful never to miss the best.——In common conversation, words spoken "with grace" will be wise, sensible, winning *favor* (the more precise sense of "grace"), which must imply that both words and the spirit that is in and with them are conciliating, modest, affectionate. The salt that seasons speech is, perhaps, best defined as good sense; the wisdom that discerns timeliness; the fitnesses of social life; the best means of access to the hearts of men.—— How ye ought to answer, not precisely "every man," but *each individual man.* Studying your men carefully and thoroughly, you will find no two alike, and you must needs adjust yourself to men individually.

7. All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, *who is* a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord:

8. Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts;

9. With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is *one* of you. They shall make known unto you all things which *are done* here.

Both Tychicus and Onesimus were old residents of Colosse; and having been, we know not just how long, with and about Paul, could give the brethren at Colosse all the particulars of his case.

10. Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;)

11. And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only *are my* fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me.

Of the imprisonment of Aristarchus, this is our only notice. Luke speaks of him as "a man of Macedonia, Paul's companion in travel;" caught in the great mob at Ephesus (Acts 19: 29); as again at Thessalonica, accompanying Paul into Asia (20: 4); and

yet again, "a Macedonian of Thessalonica," with the group of friends who accompanied Paul the prisoner to Rome (27: 2). Coupled with these notices is the remarkable fact that in Paul's letter to Philemon (v. 24), written apparently very near the same time with this to Colosse, he and Mark, with others, are called "my fellow-laborers," while Epaphras is his fellow-prisoner—the two having, it would seem, interchanged their respective relations. Was this done under the action of the Roman civil authorities, or were they allowed to change places at their will, one to relieve the other? No historic evidence has come down to decide.

Marcus (Mark) we are glad to see once more back in the confiding sympathies of the great apostle, after what Luke has told us of his apparent instability or timidity, and the great trial it brought upon this dauntless apostle (Acts 15: 37–39).

It is conceded that this Mark is the evangelist historian. These three men, said to be "of the circumcision," and hence probably Jews, were his only fellow-laborers of Jewish antecedents who had wrought with him in the interests of the gospel kingdom and had been his comforters.

12. Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

13. For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them *that are* in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.

Epaphras is brought to view above (1: 7, 8), where see Notes. This warm testimony to his prayerfulness and fidelity in gospel work is refreshing, both in itself, and as a bright example; and yet more, in view of the comfort which the imprisoned apostle must have had in such a friend by his side.——The particular point of his prayer for the brethren at Colosse deserves attention: That "they might stand perfect and complete in all the will of God"—"perfect" indicating their mature and fully developed Christian character; "complete" indicating their full persuasion and entire confidence in all gospel truth, as opposed to crude conceptions or unsettled convictions. The phrase, "in all the will of God," suggests practical duty as well as doctrinal truth.—"Great zeal for you"—but Paul's word for "zeal" rather means *labor*, yet whether otherwise than in prayer does not appear from the context.

14. Luke the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.

15. Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house.

Luke, supposed to be identical with the evangelist historian and the writer of the Acts, is noticed rarely in Paul's epistles. This notice suggests both his profession and his amiable character. Being one of the few friends who identified their lives and

fortunes with Paul the prisoner and went with him from Cæsarea to Rome, it is pleasant to find him there at Paul's right hand at this point near the close of his first imprisonment, and with him yet again near the close of his second and last imprisonment (2 Tim. 4: 11), where Paul says: "Only Luke is with me"—Demas having forsaken me through his love for this present world.—— "The church which is in thy house," suggests the group of believers who made his house their accustomed place of worship. A similar allusion to "the church in the house" of Priscilla and Aquila appears in Rom. 16: 5.

16. And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the *epistle* from Laodicea.

See Introduction (p. 150) for remarks on this practice of interchanging the letters received from the apostle for mutual edification. This reference to a letter of his to Laodicea seems to show conclusively that some of Paul's genuine letters to churches are lost, and that only a part were brought into the sacred canon. On the question whether those lost epistles were inspired equally with those which were preserved, we have no positive knowledge, yet I see no reasonable ground for the negative opinion. How it happened that some were omitted, and for what definite reasons, if for any other than neglect, are points upon which conjectures are our only data, and these would be of small account.

17. And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it.

Archippus had been recently installed their pastor (we may reasonably suppose), so that Paul's deep sympathy for that church and his blended sympathy and love for their new pastor dictated this very brief but richly pregnant "*charge*." This gospel ministry which thou hast received from the Lord Jesus—this momentous trust—take heed that thou fulfill. Let never a duty involved in it be neglected; let its labors be thy joy and thy life—that so thou mayest render thy account at last in peace and triumph.

18. The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

The salutation in his own hand, and the request that they would remember his bonds for Christ—that long and severe trial to his patience and his faith—close this precious epistle.

EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

I.

INTRODUCTION.

The inquiring Bible student will study this epistle with greater interest and profit after a brief attention to the following points:

I. *The locality and history of this city Thessalonica:*
II. The *church*;—when and by whom founded:
III. The *author* and *date* of this epistle:

IV. Its *occasion* and *object*, coupled with its peculiar points, and its analogies with other epistles.

I. In the apostolic age, Thessalonica was a rich and populous city; under the Roman rule made the capital of the province of Macedonia. It was situated at the head of the Sinus Thermaicus, one of the longest arms of the Archipelago: 350 miles west of Constantinople; 100 south-west of Philippi; 200 north by west from Athens. Under its modern name, Saloniki, it still retains much of its ancient importance, having a population of 60,000 or 70,000. It was therefore one of the salient points in that Macedonia to which Paul was divinely summoned by the angel-voice—"Come over into Macedonia, and help us."

II. The church was founded by Paul, having Silas for his fellow-laborer. In a very few verses (Acts 17: 1–9), Luke has recorded how these two men, fresh from their one night's wonderful experience under scourging and imprisonment at Philippi, moved on through Amphipolis and Apollonia to Thessalonica, and there, in pursuance of their missionary policy of seizing the great strategic points for the conquest of the nations to Christ, they opened their gospel battery upon this great city. Finding there a synagogue of Jews, "Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three successive Sabbath days reasoned with them out of their common Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen from the dead, and that this Jesus whom I preach to you is that very Christ." In

the result, some believed, and united themselves with Paul and Silas; also of devout Greeks, a yet greater number, and of prominent women not a few.——But here again Paul's former experience repeated itself; the unbelieving Jews, envious and bigoted to madness, raised a mob; "set all the city in an uproar;" managed to strike a responsive chord by appealing to the political prejudices and passions of leading citizens, who for self-protection (as they deemed) took bail of Jason and certain other brethren as security against riot and disturbance of the peace, and so released the Christian brethren. Under these circumstances nothing remained but to send the apostles away.——Thus suddenly were Paul's personal labors in this great city closed by violence. But the seed was planted. Other brethren, less prominent than he, and hence less likely to arouse opposition, probably continued the work he had begun. It is plain that Paul's work there was pressed with all the prodigious energy of his intense nature. His back still raw from the scourging at Philippi, his soul stirred to a lofty enthusiasm and a dauntless heroism by this vindictive opposition and by the pressure of stern obstacles, he poured forth the torrents of his eloquence and lavished his rich sympathies without stint upon the people whom he could reach. Did he ever labor more severely, or feel more intensely, or move upon men's souls with mightier inspiration drawn from on high? It was with him the labor of but a few days to lay the foundations of this Christian church; but those were days ever memorable in the history of the great apostle. We shall not half appreciate these two epistles unless we hold well in mind the moral atmosphere in which that enterprise in church-planting had its birth.

III. That Paul wrote this epistle, no sensible critic has ever doubted.——The time was apparently not many months after his expulsion. His very great solicitude for their spiritual welfare weighed so heavily upon his soul that at last, when he could endure his burden no longer (1 Thess. 3: 1, 2), he "thought it good to be left at Athens alone," and to spare Timothy to go and see the brethren at Thessalonica and bring him word as to their state. They (Timothy and Silas) rejoined him at Corinth (Acts 18: 5), and there, during, apparently, the very early months of his year and a half's residence in that city, Paul wrote this epistle. Manifestly it was occasioned by the intelligence received through Timothy and was designed to meet their

case as thus reported.——This fixes its date proximately in the early part of A. D. 53, and ranks this as in time the earliest of Paul's epistles.

IV. The occasion and objects of the epistle are readily gathered from the epistle itself. Foremost among the objects was the warm outpouring of his joyful sympathies in gratitude and thanksgiving to God for the good report he had heard of their steadfastness in love and faith, and of their patient endurance of persecution. The occasion awakened many reminiscences of his own experience there, to which he gives free expression.——Moreover, it is quite obvious that opinions were current there in regard to the second advent of the Lord, which in some respects were exerting a very undesirable influence, and therefore called for correction. In particular, they were entertaining the notion that their deceased Christian friends would be, as compared with themselves, at a disadvantage in the expected near coming of the Lord. What their doctrine was in regard to a resurrection of the righteous dead, is not altogether clear; but it is plain that they sorrowed greatly and very unreasonably over their Christian dead as likely to miss the joy of the Lord's coming. This error, Paul deemed it vital to correct.——Moreover, there are repeated injunctions against disorder, unreasonable excitement and neglect of their ordinary business—all apparently originating in their notion of the near coming of the Lord. These disorders and undue excitements Paul deemed it very necessary to rebuke. These points are sufficiently prominent to justify their being regarded as the special objects of the epistle.——In the main, however, Paul has much joy in the steadfast piety of the great body of the converts, and therefore devotes his letter mostly to instructions and exhortations looking toward a higher, purer Christian life.

This epistle has many points of close analogy with that to the Philippians, *e. g.*, in its general tone of commendation; its warm, outgushing sympathy and its free expressions of joyful confidence in their Christian integrity and earnestness of devotion. In neither do we find allusions to flagrant immoralities, or to that class of doctrinal errors which appeared early in the churches of Asia Minor.

It will be noticed that these epistles to Thessalonica are earlier by several years than any other—by nearly ten years earlier than those written from Rome during his first imprisonment there.

EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

I.

CHAPTER I.

Introduction (v. 1): thanksgiving to God for the fruits of grace among the converts there (v. 2–4); reminiscences of his labors there and of the attending power of the Holy Ghost (v. 5); and of the blessed results in their Christian life and labors (v. 6–8), reproducing the same fruits all abroad (v. 9, 10).

1. Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians *which is* in God the Father, and *in* the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The names of Silvanus and Timotheus, are here, not as joint authors in this epistle, but as associated with Paul in Christian sympathy and labors. They send their mutual salutations and benedictions, and doubtless are with Paul in the "we" (v. 2), giving thanks to God and of one heart with Paul in prayer for the brethren.——Silvanus, known uniformly as Silas in Acts but always Silvanus in the epistles, appears first (Acts 15: 22) as one of the "chief men among the brethren" of the church in Jerusalem, and sent by them with the decrees of the great council. He was "a prophet"; labored usefully at Antioch (Acts 15: 32), and was chosen by Paul to take the place, by his side, of Barnabas and Mark in his second great missionary tour, the history of which begins with Acts 15: 40. He will be remembered as with Paul at Philippi (Acts 16: 19) and at Thessalonica (Acts 17: 4), attending him also to Berea, but left there while Paul went on to Athens alone; and not long after, rejoining him at Corinth from Macedonia (Acts 18: 5). Paul's second letter to Corinth (1: 19) recognizes both Silvanus and Timothy as his fellow-laborers there.

Timothy appears first at Lystra (Acts 16: 1–3) a city of Lycaonia, Asia Minor. He was then apparently young, but religiously trained. He went with Paul to Macedonia and became one of his most constant and devoted associates during the greater part if not even the whole of his subsequent life. (See more in the Introduction to 1 Timothy).

The best textual authorities close this v. 1 with the words "grace and peace," omitting all that follows.

2. We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

3. Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

4. Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

It would be unpardonable not to notice what Paul could say of himself and his associates as to prayer and thanksgiving. "Always giving thanks," making mention of each church by name with prayer in their behalf—verily this is a rich example, not only for all gospel ministers but for all Christian people as well. If Paul was great in eloquence, in patient endurance, in moral heroism; not less was he great in the depth of his Christian sympathies and in the natural outpouring of his soul in perpetual prayer.

As to the brethren of that church, the qualities in their character and the features of their Christian life which he joyfully remembered as incentives to thanksgiving and prayer are here;—"Your work of faith"—your faith-inspired work—prompted and energized by faith;—your "labor of love"—labor begotten of love—labor not done grudgingly but lovingly;—your "patience" born of "hope" in our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus faith, love, and hope in the Lord, were the inspiring power unto all their labor and endurance for Christ and his cause.——All these Christian labors and graces are of the sort that live, as it were, in the sight of God our Father;—that flourish under his eye.——In such manifestations of spirit and of life, Paul sees the evidence of their election of God. Nothing short of that, or other than that, could account for such fruits of holiness.

5. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

The Greek word for "came" has here the sense—developed itself toward you; made its presence felt upon you. It proved a gospel, not in word only or chiefly, but in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in the strongest convictions—those of real assurance. But we need not speak of these things; for ye know what sort of men we were among you, laboring for your salvation.—It is obvious that this description of the way the gospel came and wrought among them refers rather to the apostles than to the Thessalonians—to the apostles primarily. It was first of all a gospel of power in their own souls—a gospel made mighty upon their own hearts by the Holy Ghost—a gospel which held sway over their souls with the potency of resistless conviction.——Men who preach the gospel under such convictions—its truths thus mighty upon their own souls through the Holy Spirit—are never wont to labor in vain.——Very similar testimony to this Paul bears as to his preaching near this same time, in Corinth: "And my speech

and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power—that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God" (1 Cor. 2: 4, 5).

6. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:

7. So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

This imitation of the apostles and of the Lord also was shown specially in the point of receiving the gospel heartily, despite of the persecutions then raging. Their joy in the Holy Ghost was the more rich and precious for the severity of their trial and the strength of their faith.—So signally strong was their steadfast endurance that their example sent its influence abroad over all Macedonia and Achaia. These two provinces under the Roman regime comprised the entire territory of ancient Greece and Macedonia.

8. For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

9. For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

10. And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

The expression—"sounded out," is very significant—as if the gospel word which came to them rang out, reproducing itself, its sound echoing and re-echoing, till, gathering strength from each reverberation, its notes were prolonged and wafted on and on, not only pervading those entire provinces but regions indefinitely far beyond. This gathering up of the gospel voices of testimony and proclamation into one mighty volume of sound, swelling away into distant lands, is a beautiful representation of the self-perpetuating forces of the true gospel in human souls. All the world came to know the faith and the spiritual power of that Thessalonian church. Paul seems to say that it left little more for himself and his associates to do.

They themselves—the people of those provinces—taking the gospel from the Thessalonian converts, showed in their experience how ye received the gospel from us, and turned from idols to serve the living God and to await the coming of his Son. The genuine, practical power of his gospel was reproduced in the souls converted by his Thessalonian converts. Thus the waves of gospel sound seemed to lose none of their power as they traveled outward into remotest lands.

CHAPTER II.

Reminiscences of labor (v. 1, 2); points on the negative side (v. 3–6); and on the positive (v. 7–9); appealing to themselves to witness how the apostles had labored among them (v. 10–12); grateful for the manner in which they received the word (v. 13) and became followers of the Judean churches in the endurance of persecution (v. 14–16); his longing to see them (v. 17, 18), because they were his hope and joy (v. 19, 20).

1. For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:

2. But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.

The scenes at Philippi—the mob, the scourging, and that eventful night in the stocks and the inner prison—were all recent and fresh—the smart of the pain scarcely ceased, and the sense of purposed indignity yet keen and sharp, when they entered this great city, Thessalonica. (See Acts 16 and 17: 1–9.) But never a moment did Paul and Silas quail before mob or magistrate; scourging, or imprisonment. Rather they seem to have been only the more bold in their God to speak the gospel word with mightier endeavor—a struggle that rose almost to agony (much "agōn" is Paul's word).

3. For our exhortation *was* not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:

4. But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

5. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God *is* witness:

6. Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor *yet* of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

"Not of uncleanness," looks to impure motives and denies this. "*Allowed* of God"—better, approved, approbated of God to be intrusted with the gospel. We speak to please not man but God who hath approved our hearts—the same word as above (Eng. "allowed") but in sense approved.——In v. 5, the Greek for "used," applied to "words of flattery," is noticeable, being the common Greek verb for become * in the sense—we were not in that sort of thing—took no part in it.——"Cloak of covetousness"

* γινομαι.

does not make covetousness itself the cloak, but denies the use of flattering words as a cloak to conceal real covetousness—this covetousness being the thing charged by his calumniators but indignantly denied by the apostle.——In v. 6, we perhaps naturally think of "burdensome" as looking toward the burden of his support. He does refer to this point below (v. 9); but here he refers rather to the assumption of honor and dignity, in the same line of thought with the previous clause—"we sought not glory." We might have assumed great authority; might have put on the attitude of dignity as the apostles of Jesus Christ, and have made ourselves in this sense very *weighty* among you;—but we did no such thing.

7. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

8. So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

So far from putting on airs of dignity or authority, we were gentle, mild, of tender spirit, loving and cherishing as a nurse folds to her bosom dear infant ones, frail and suffering. So deep and strong was the love we bore toward you that we could gladly have given you not the gospel only but our very souls, at the martyr's stake.

9. For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail: for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

Here Paul comes to the fact of their physical labors (those of his associates and himself) night and day for their personal subsistence, so as not to burden any of the people. To this custom of his we find several allusions, especially in his letters to the church at Corinth. (See 2 Cor. 11.) He never questioned, never relinquished his right to material support, but he sometimes forbore to assert the right or receive the aid, that he might take away all occasion of scandal from men eager to find or to make up such occasion.

10. Ye *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how holily and justly and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:

11. As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father *doth* his children,

12. That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

It must be assumed that Paul had some special reason for this very emphatic, not to say solemn, affirmation of his blameless, up-

right life before the Thessalonians. It is due to him not as a Christian only but as a man, to assume that these words of personal experience and history were not the fruit of vanity, nor a bid for applause, nor a claim for the honor that comes from men. What definite form of scandal he sought to meet—what reproach upon the gospel and upon his Great Master he would avert and disarm, we can not say precisely; but he knew that the Jews of the synagogue at Thessalonica "who believed not" "were moved with envy" and were equal not only to any degree of mob violence but to any extreme of detraction, falsehood and slander. (Acts 17: 5–9.) This letter was written not many months after the scenes which Luke describes, so that we may conveniently assume that those envious Jews were not all dead nor all converted from their malice to a better mind.

13. For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not *as* the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

"For this cause"—but to what does the word "this" refer? *What* "cause" does he speak of? For the answer we go back to the exceeding great affliction and earnest labors of the apostles in their gospel work at Thessalonica. Because we felt so deeply and labored so severely, therefore we also (*ye* much more) but we too and also give thanks without ceasing to God that our labors were not in vain. Our gospel word was effective because ye received it, not as the word of man, but as the word of God.——In the last clause, it is of some importance to determine to what the word "which" ("which effectually worketh") refers as its antecedent. Is it—God *who* worketh, or the word *which* worketh? Our authorized version "which" is no certain index of the view of our translators, for "which" in their usage may be either which or who. So in the Greek, so far as is shown by the gender, the grammatical antecedent may be either "word" or "God"—both these nouns being masculine.

The following considerations, taken in their combined force, seem to me decisive in favor of referring "which" to "word." Thus the thing asserted will be that the "*word*" works effectually in believers.——(*a.*) "Word" rather than "God" is the leading thought before the mind in this verse. How they received the *word* is the point in hand. (*b.*) The term "also" ["which effectually worketh *also*"] ought to follow "which" in the English as it does in the Greek:—which [word] also worketh effectually. We shall see the pertinence and bearing of this "also" if we consider that Paul has brought into view the influence of God already by saying that they received the gospel not as the word of man, but as the word of God. Therefore it only remained to add the other element of power, viz., that of the word itself. This he does by saying that the word *also* works effectually in

believers. But perhaps most decisive of all is consideration (*c.*) —the facts of New Testament usage;—viz., that when God's power is expressed by this Greek verb energize,* it is always put in the active voice. The examples are 1 Cor. 12: 6—Gal. 2: 8 and 3: 5—Eph. 1: 11, 20 and 2: 2—Phil. 2: 13. On the other hand, the energy of "faith, working by love" (Gal. 5: 6) is put in the Greek middle voice as here. The distinction is nice but real and in this case should be considered decisive.† Under this nice but vital and carefully maintained distinction, the active voice is used of God's working to denote that his energy is immediate, direct, and supreme; but the middle voice of the same verb for other forms of agency, subordinate, inter-acting, or of forces acting mutually upon each other. It was desirable to distinguish broadly between God's working and all other working.

14. For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they *have* of the Jews:

15. Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

16. Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always: for the wrath is to come upon them to the uttermost.

It was specially pertinent to compare the persecutions endured by the brethren at Thessalonica with those endured by the Christian churches in Judea, Pharisaic bigoted Jews having been the instigators in both cases alike. Then Paul forcibly enlarges upon the awful guilt of those malicious Jews who murdered Jesus, slew their own prophets, set themselves enviously against the salvation of the Gentile world ["contrary to all men"], and so brought down upon themselves and their nation the crushing, exterminating judgments of the Almighty.——In v. 16 the clause—"to fill up their sins always"—should not be referred to Gentiles, supposably left without the gospel to hopeless sinning; but to Jews who were rapidly filling up the measure of their national guilt to the very brim. (See the same view in Matt. 23: 32–39.) ——In the last clause of v. 16, the word "for" is misleading.

* ενεργεω

† Other cases of the middle voice of this verb are Rom. 7: 5; 2 Cor. 1: 6 and 4: 12; Eph. 3. 20; Col. 1: 29 and 2 Thess. 2: 7 and James 5: 16. This distinction between the use of the active voice for God's personal energy; and the middle voice for other forms of energy, working and inter-working, is entirely uniform. The passages cited are all that occur in the New Testament, with the exception of Herod's reference of the miracles he heard of to the energy of the Baptist risen from the dead (Matt. 14: 2 and Mark 6: 14).

The word "*but*" gives the relations of thought much better. Paul would say—Ye need not marvel that such awful wickedness should seem to pass unnoticed of God; it can not be so long; it may seem so now; *but* the tremendous judgments of God are even now almost bursting upon their heads. The awful cloud is gathering; soon ye will see it break: and sweep them with a deluge of ruin unto their complete destruction. In fact, less than fifteen years intervened before that cloud of vengeance broke and Jerusalem fell!

17. But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

18. Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

"Taken from you"—Paul's word suggesting the bereavement of *orphanage* (being *orphanized* from you).——How Satan managed to prevent Paul's visit, he has not told us. But this allusion shows that Paul fully and practically believed—what his words to the Ephesians (6: 12) imply—that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood only, but against principalities and powers—the rulers of this world's darkness; that we come to a grapple hand to hand with the devil, in more ways than men are wont to think of. ——Was this belief which Paul certainly held, a real knowledge of facts, or a notion of his superstitious fancy? For aught I can see, if we admit his inspiration of God, we must accept it as knowledge of the truth and not as a delusion of human superstition.

19. For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Are* not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

20. For ye are our glory and joy.

Paul had personally so much at stake—had so much stock (shall we call it) in their Christian stability, so much prospective joy and ineffable reward, to come from their perseverance to the end;—why should he not labor unceasingly and pray most fervently for their final victory through faith in the Lord?——Note that these anticipations of Paul assume most certainly that in the future life he will personally know every convert from under his labors in this life. That life links itself to this as if the river of death severed dear friends no more than the crossing of any river of earthly sort is wont to do.

CHAPTER III.

Why he sent Timothy to see them (v. 1–3); fearful that persecution might break down their faith (v. 4, 5); but Timothy's return and good tidings had brought comfort (v. 6–8), and had inspired grateful thank-offerings and prayers (v. 9, 10); the objects prayed for (v. 11–13).

1. Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;
2. And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellow-laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:
3. That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

The narrative in Acts seems to show that Silas and Timothy remained yet awhile in Thessalonica when Paul was brought on to Athens (Acts 17: 14, 15); that while Paul was there alone, waiting for them to come, he met the Jews in their synagogue and subsequently made his great speech on Mars Hill; and finally, that when Silas and Timothy returned from Macedonia [Thessalonica], they came to Paul at Corinth whence this epistle was written.

The tenor of this epistle seems to imply that Paul sent Timothy from Athens to Thessalonica, his burdened spirit being able no longer to endure his anxieties and uncertainties as to his converts there. Neither the history nor the epistle purport to give all the facts of the case. If these facts were all known it may be reasonably presumed that the missing links would be supplied.

In v. 2 slight unimportant variations of text appear in the clause descriptive of Timothy.——In sending him, Paul's twofold object was (*a*) to establish; and (*b*) not to "comfort," but rather to *exhort*—this being the more usual and more nearly the primary sense of the verb he used. To "*comfort* them concerning their faith" was by no means the sense of Paul's words. Rather he would exhort them to steadfastness and to unflinching endurance. ——The fact that Christians were destined to persecution had been carefully taught, so that they need not be surprised or stumbled by it. Jesus had said (John 16: 33) "In the world ye shall have tribulation;" and the apostles were careful to reaffirm it (Acts 14: 22), "saying that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."

4. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.
5. For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent

to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labor be in vain.

While yet with them he had prudently forewarned them of persecution—its elements being even then apparent. After the storm had broken upon himself and driven him away, his fear as to their future was so great that he sent Timothy to see and exhort them. He understood Satan's wiles so well that he expected him to be on hand to assault them in their exposed condition.

6. But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also *to see* you:

7. Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our afflictions and distress by your faith:

8. For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

Timothy's return with good tidings brought him not relief only but great joy. "We *live* if ye stand fast in the Lord"—"live" in the sense of real life, a life worth living—a deep joy which no word can express better than *life* as antithetic to death.

9. For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;

10. Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

How can we adequately thank God for this relief to our hearts and this joy in the answer to our anxious prayers in your behalf? Paul had been feeling that nothing short of going to see them in person could meet the case; but now his heart is quite relieved. The thing he so much desired, viz., to perfect what might be deficient in their faith, he trusted had been accomplished.——Whether this supposed deficiency was specially in doctrine or in practice—in the truth believed, or in the strength of the belief itself, does not appear. Very probably both these aspects of faith are included.

11. Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

12. And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all *men*, even as we *do* toward you:

13. To the end he may stablish your hearts unblamable

in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

These are the special subjects of his prayer in their behalf;—that God's good providence might open the way for him to go to them; that their love toward each other and toward all men might abound, and their hearts be established in holiness—be made strong and be blameless in holiness, *in* the coming (the precise sense)—*in* the coming of the Lord Jesus with all his saints. In that eventful day, to be found blameless in holiness would be beyond measure glorious! Let them think of that coming, and let the thought of it be a perpetual inspiration to holy living.

CHAPTER IV.

Exhortation to do the duty they know (v. 1, 2); against sins of moral impurity (v. 3–7); duties enjoined not of men only but of God (v. 8); of brotherly love (v. 9, 10), and honest labor (v. 11, 12). Sorrow for the pious dead (v. 13); to be alleviated by assurance of their resurrection (v. 14); that saints, living at the moment of Christ's second coming have no advantage in point of time over the dead, all being caught up together to meet the Lord (v. 15–18).

1. Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort *you* by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, *so* ye would abound more and more.

2. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

In the last part of v. 1, the improved text introduces between the clauses—"please God," and "so ye would abound"—these words—"Even as also ye are walking." This softens the exhortation by disclaiming any implication that they were not doing well.——Yet fraternal exhortation is always in order. Let all God's people see to it that they do as well as they know.

3. For this is the will of God, *even* your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

4. That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor;

5. Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

6. That no *man* go beyond and defraud his brother in *any*

matter: because that the Lord *is* the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

7. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

This entire passage treats of sins against moral purity—violations of the seventh commandment. The will of God is utterly against such sins, and demands, instead, sanctification; purity—not of deed only, but of heart.

"His vessel" (v. 4), assumes marriage, the "vessel" being the wife, in the sense of Peter (1 Eps. 3: 7)—"Giving honor to the wife as to the weaker vessel." The apostolic doctrine holds every-where, that "marriage is honorable in all" (Heb. 13: 4).—its legitimate purposes being in and according to the will of God. ——In v. 6 we are not to think of covetousness in the business sense, but as a violation of the seventh commandment—trampling upon the marital rights of a Christian brother. If this be flagrant sin outside the church, how much more so against a brother in Christ! No wonder the Lord will be the swift and terrible avenger of his wronged and outraged child! Verily, God never called his people to such uncleanness, but to purity of life and of heart. Let it be their joy and blessedness to respond kindly and fully to this heavenly call.

8. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit.

Whoever despises these laws of purity, impatient of self-restraint, despises not man but God. Therefore let him beware! ——The obligations to moral purity are heightened immeasurably by the fact that the Holy Ghost dwells in his people—their bodies being his real temple. Note how strongly Paul puts this point (1 Cor. 6: 15–19 and 3: 16, 17 and 2 Cor. 6: 16 and 7: 1).

9. But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

10. And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;

Full at once of beauty and of strength is Paul's word here:—"Ye yourselves are *God-taught** to love one another." The Divine Spirit impresses no lesson more universally or more deeply upon the souls that are really new-born to holiness. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" (1 John 3: 14).

11. And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

*θεοδιδακτοι.

12. That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and *that* ye may have lack of nothing.

No doubt there was occasion for these gentle rebukes. All was not right in Thessalonica. Some of them were restive, unquiet, neglecting their proper worldly business; meddling with the business of other people instead of giving due attention to their own. It admits of no reasonable question that the disturbing element lay in their mistaken notions of the near coming of the Lord. The second epistle (3: 11, 12) indicates that these disorders prevailed there and had come to the ears of the apostle. ——"Study to be quiet"—as opposed to an excited, agitated feeling—the usual fruit of ill-defined and mistaken anticipations of Christ's near coming. It is plain that God never intended the doctrine that Christ's second coming is to be with no forewarning, entirely sudden when it comes, or even the doctrine of its being near at hand, should arrest the ordinary labors and duties of life and put men upon gazing upward into the starry heavens. It should indeed induce them to live in their heart's love above the world, yet by no means outside of it, or aloof from its ordinary duties.——The considerations here put are pertinent—that ye walk *honorably* (better than "honestly") toward those outside the church, and earn a comfortable support by honest labor, never throwing yourselves upon other men for your living.

13. But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

It was their great mistake to suppose that their Christian dead would miss the glories of Christ's second coming, or get them only at great disadvantage compared with those who should be yet living when he came. Paul would not have them remain thus ignorant upon a point so vital to Christian consolation over the sainted dead. Let Godless heathen bewail their dead in all the agony of utter despair; but let Christians never so dishonor their precious gospel.——The original words rendered "Sleep in Jesus" are beautifully significant—*those who are laid asleep by Jesus;* who owe it to Jesus that death to them is only "sleep"—a sleep from which they shall in due season wake to life immortal and all-glorious!——Here, as in the great standard passage (1 Cor. 15: 12–20), Paul rests the Christians' hope of a personal resurrection upon the resurrection of their Lord. If God raised him, so will he also raise all his people.——"Will God bring with him," is put impressively. They are with him now in his prepared mansions above; and so, when God shall bring forth Jesus, the Glorious Judge, and all the holy angels with him, he will bring those departed saints also.

15. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

The strong emphasis and tone of authority in these words—"This we say to you in the word of the Lord"—presupposes a special reason or occasion—probably in the fact that those who held the erroneous notion here refuted were enthusiastic, perhaps very positive; perhaps, as is not uncommon in the case of this very delusion, quite confident that they were taught of God, even above the apostles. Hence this most solemn averment:—I say this to you on the authority of a special revelation. I speak in and by the very word of the Lord.——"Prevent them which are asleep"—certainly not in the sense of obstructing their resurrection, nor in any sense now given to the word "prevent;" but in the old sense, now obsolete, of *being in advance of;* being before them in time. The point Paul makes is that those then living will have no advantage over those previously dead. The latter will see the coming Christ as soon as the former. Both classes will be caught up together to meet the Lord.

Here I must call special attention to the apostle's word "we." Some readers have supposed and even some commentators have assumed that Paul, in thus classing himself among the living, still remaining alive unto the coming of the Lord, shows that he expected to live till that coming.——Now, in regard to this construction of Paul's word "we," and this assumption founded upon it, I deem it very important to say—

1. It is simply groundless—with no real foundation. It is his way of putting the case to make his points clear and forcible. It is equivalent to saying—Suppose Christ should come to-morrow. Then we who are living would have not the least advantage over our Christian brethren who are dead. To make his point perfectly clear, he must needs put before their thought the two classes: those living when Christ should come, and those previously dead. He wishes to compare these two classes with each other on the single point of supposed advantage on the side of the living. It was a matter of not the least consequence *when* the Lord should come, whether to-morrow, ten years later, or ten thousand;—the facts of his argument would be the same;—those living then would have no advantage over the previously dead. In the same way and on a similar subject, Paul said (1 Cor. 15: 51, 52)—"*We* shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed:"—"the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and *we* shall be changed." Here the not-sleeping who have never met death are one class, and the dead to be raised, are another, and these two classes will be broadly distinguished precisely at the moment when Christ shall come—no matter when that coming may be. Paul's use of the word "we" proves nothing whatever as to his own personal opinion or expectation on this point of abiding in the flesh unto that coming. The assumption now under consideration is therefore groundless.

2. This construction and assumption encumber the very important question of Paul's inspiration fearfully; for they suppose him to have been utterly in error on this point—the *time* of Christ's coming,—*i. e.*, they suppose him to have held an entirely false opinion as to the time. Now it is not only an unfortunate mistake to encumber the fact of Paul's inspiration thus; it is worse than unfortunate; it is unpardonable; it is gratuitous; it is damaging—with no apology for the mischief done.

3. This notion ought to be forever precluded by the testimony Paul has himself given that he expected to die as other men die, with never a thought of escaping death by the Lord's coming too soon for the persecutor's guillotine to take effect. Hear what he says:—"According to my earnest expectation and my hope that Christ may be magnified by my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain," etc. (Phil. 1: 20–23).—Again: "I am now ready to be offered; and the time of my departure is at hand" (2 Tim. 4–6).

4. The case is put beyond all possible doubt by the fact that when Paul learned that the delusion in regard to Christ's near coming was still rife in Thessalonica, and was perhaps aggravated by their false construction of these very words, he hastens in a second epistle to set them right on this point, "beseeching them not to be shaken in mind or troubled by any word or letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand" (2 Eps. 2: 1–3). He tells them explicitly that this great day shall not come until there shall first have been a great apostasy. Thus the question of Paul's personal expectation of living on earth to see that day ought to be considered forever settled by his own explicit testimony.

16. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17. Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

"Shall descend with a shout"—the shout of command as the word signifies; it being in frequent use for the authoritative command of a general at the head of his army; the admiral in command of his ship; the captain to his bench of rowers.——The intermediate agent whose great trump rings out this call may be the archangel here present. The presence of attending angel-hosts in this scene is often referred to in the Scriptures (Matt. 24: 31 and 25: 31 and 2 Thess. 1: 7—Jude 14).

"The dead in Christ shall rise first"—not first as compared with the raising of the wicked, to which there is not the least allusion here; but first as to the ascension of the saints then living. So Paul's language explicitly declares. The dead in Christ shall rise first, *i. e.*, before a certain other event to be named; and then (immediately thereafter is the Greek), this second event is dis-

tinctly defined, viz., the then living caught up, along with the risen saints to meet the Lord in the air.——Then and thenceforward forever shall we all be "*with the Lord.*" The "many mansions" himself has prepared (John 14: 2, 3) open to their welcome reception; the Savior's prayer (John 17: 24), "Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am that they may behold my glory," is answered fully and forever; the words of the beloved disciple, "We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3: 2), will have their fulfillment in the everlasting peace and purity of heaven.

Let this comfort the sorrowing hearts of the Thessalonian brethren, and all other Christian hearts that sorrow, sighing for some gospel consolation; for what more, what richer, what other consolation can human hearts desire?

CHAPTER V.

This chapter of exhortations suggests that the day of the Lord will come suddenly (v 1–3); but ye have light and should walk in it ever watching (v. 4–7), wearing the gospel armor because God purposes your salvation through the Savior's death (v. 8–11). They should honor their religious teachers (v. 12, 13), watching over each other that none fall into sin (v. 15, 16). Various brief precepts (v. 16–22); prayer for their sanctification (v. 23, 24); final requests and benedictions (v. 25–28).

1. But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

"Times and seasons" are not altogether synonymous terms—the former denoting properly long indefinite periods; the latter, periods specially adapted for some specific purpose, having their own peculiarity—as "the seasons of the year." But in the present case no special distinction appears, both referring apparently to the great subject ever prominent in this epistle—the time of the Lord's second coming. As to this, ye know accurately [absolutely and truly] one great fact—viz., that it will come with no forewarning; unexpectedly, as a thief of the night sends forward no token. This salient feature of that coming, Jesus himself had taught most fully (Matt. 24: 42–44 and 25: 13, and Luke 17: 24 and 12: 39, 40); and his disciples had repeated his words (2 Pet.

3: 10, and Rev. 3: 3 and 16: 5).——In v. 3, read: "While yet men are saying"—then, all suddenly, the day shall break upon them. Hence let all men be ready and ready always.——It is but the dictate of common sense that we should account the day of death to each individual as in every practical point equivalent to the day of the Lord's coming. So viewed, the admonition applies to every soul in every age; to every reader of these lines, and to him who writes as well.

4. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6. Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober.

7. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

The illustration from the night thief who always strikes under cover of darkness, suggests that Christians, having the light of knowledge, especially in the point of forewarning, need not be surprised *by night*, there being no such night of ignorance to them. Nor should they sleep (spiritually) as others do; but be evermore watching in the sense of being evermore in readiness for the Lord's coming. Leave it to others, if so they will, to sleep as in the night, and be drunken too; but not so should the Lord's people.

8. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation.

9. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

10. Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

11. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

See more concerning this defensive armor in Eph. 6: 13–17. It should encourage and even inspire every Christian heart that God purposes and promotes our ultimate salvation through the death and the risen life of his Son. He died for us that we, in life or in death, should be in him.——"Sleep," for the state of death, is the fit word here, since it is only in and through Christ that death to the Christian becomes a sleep (and this of the body only)—a sleep out of which he is in due time to wake bodily, to another life, immortal and all-glorious.

12. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

13. And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. *And* be at peace among yourselves.

Here is one and the same class of men, exercising these three functions—laboring among them, presiding over them, and admonishing. The precise sense of the original might be put thus: Those who labor among you—the same persons being also over you and giving you admonition. The second and third participles being without the article, can not refer to other persons, but must refer to the same.——*To know* is here in its emphatic sense—that of recognizing their presence, their mission, their responsibilities, and of giving them all due honor for their work's sake. This esteem is not enjoined and enforced on the score of personal acquaintance, or of traits of personal character; but of their devoted spiritual service. Love and esteem the men who give their heart and their life to your spiritual welfare.——"At peace among yourselves;" for probably there was some occasion for this exhortation. The duty is so vital to the well-being of society and pre-eminently of the church, that this exhortation rarely comes amiss.

14. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all *men.*

The word "unruly," used quite currently of the lower animals, we rarely apply to our own species in adult life. Paul's word means the disorderly, who violate the common principles and obligations of labor for self-support. It should be interpreted by comparison with other allusions in both these epistles (1 Eps. 4: 10, 11, and 2 Eps. 3: 6, 11). Even Ellicott comments thus: "The precise reference is probably to the neglect of duties and calling, into which the Thessalonians had lapsed, owing to mistaken views of the time of the Lord's coming."——"Comfort the feeble-minded"—literally those of small soul, who would be special sufferers under the unnatural excitement produced by the doctrine of Christ's near coming.——"Support the weak"—not the weak in body, but the weak in faith.——"Be patient toward all"—for minds easily excited and of little self-control might severely tax their patience.

15. See that none render evil for evil unto any *man;* but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all *men.*

Retaliation in revenge—always wrong, never consistent with the Christian life—is a doctrine which may be claimed to be the distinctive glory of Christianity. Let vengeance be for the Lord alone. When has the best heathen wisdom held and taught this? (See Rom. 12: 17-21, and 1 Cor. 6: 7, and 1 Pet. 3: 9, and Prov. 20: 22 and 24: 29.)

16. Rejoice evermore.
17. Pray without ceasing.
18. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

To the Christian there is always reason for joy in God. Is not God always good, and his friendship always an infinite treasure? And his kingdom always a fountain of blessedness, affording ground for perpetual rejoicing?——Paul puts the precept in the special form: "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again, I say, Rejoice" (Phil. 4: 4)—"the Lord," as used by him, being the Lord Jesus. In him we see most plainly the grounds which the Christian has for perpetual joy. (See also 2 Cor. 6: 10.)—— "Pray without ceasing"—literally, with no interruption, no lapse from the praying spirit. Our good sense should guide us in our construction of this precept. So guided, we shall expound it to enjoin, not the unceasing repetition of words of prayer, but maintaining perpetually the mental attitude of prayer toward God—always trusting, waiting, resting, and on all specially fit occasions, imploring. (See Eph. 6: 18, and Col. 4: 2, and Luke 18: 1.)—— Let this be coupled with thanksgiving for *every thing*, for God's gifts are every-where and never cease.

19. Quench not the Spirit.
20. Despise not prophesyings.
21. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.
22. Abstain from all appearance of evil.

"Quench" suggests the figure of fire—one of the figures under which the agency of the Spirit is presented. (See Acts 2: 3.) A spark may be but too easily extinguished.——The allusion here may be specially to those peculiar spiritual gifts, common in the apostolic age, some of which may have been abused by the extravagances of some among the excited Thessalonians.——They were exposed to another and kindred danger—that of despising prophesying. Some among them had flagrantly abused and scandalized the whole subject of prophecy, claiming special prophetic foresight while really having none, but making egregious blunders and utterly false pretensions—an abuse which rarely fails to accompany the unnatural excitement of the notion that the day of the Lord is about to appear.——Ellicott comments thus: "The very exhortation before us gains all its point from the fact that the more sober thinkers had been led by the present state of things to undervalue and unduly reject all the usual manifestations of the Spirit."

Under these circumstances it was specially appropriate to exhort—"Prove all things; hold fast upon the good." The good sense God has given you should be put to use pre-eminently in seasons of such unnatural excitement.

We must explain v. 22 to mean—not every thing that looks like evil—that has its "*appearance*," but rather *every form* of

evil—all its various manifestations—for real evil, and not evil that is so only in appearance, is the subject of thought here. We may apply it to the point particularly in mind. Then it will suggest that on the one hand, some were prophesying wildly about the sudden coming of the Lord; while others were repelled, being disgusted with such crude fancies and such misleading and ill-working predictions, and were even led to despise the legitimate functions of the prophetic Spirit. Abstain therefore from every form of evil. These extremes are all mischievous.

23. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

24. Faithful *is* he that calleth you, who also will do *it.*

"The God of peace"—so called because he gives peace—all spiritual blessings; whose voice Jesus re-echoed when he said (John 14: 27)—"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you."——"Sanctify you wholly"—the word for "wholly" suggesting completeness—that which reaches every part, every faculty and power of your being—a word chosen manifestly for its comprehensiveness. It is not the word in common use for "perfect," * which would rather suggest the finished *quality* of the work, as this does the universality of its application.

The careful reader would notice that in our version the words "I pray God" are in italics. They give the sense correctly because the Greek verb is in a form which implies desire, prayer. The words "I pray God" are not expressed, nor need they be.——The exact translation of the next clause would be—not "your *whole* spirit," etc., but may your spirit, soul and body be *kept whole*—kept unblemished, so as to be found blameless in the coming of the Lord. Its location makes it what grammarians call a second predicate—adding a secondary idea to the verb, indicating as to the point of Paul's prayer, *how*, in what manner, their spirit, soul and body should be kept. The idea is not that the *whole* spirit rather than any part of it, or the *whole* body as opposed to part of the body—may be kept; but that all—spirit, soul, body—may be kept all right, all pure, all true to God; and so be found blameless when Christ shall come.——The calling One—He who now calls you to this pure and spotless life—is faithful to his promises; you can trust him to second your endeavors and to respond to your prayers for this purity.——As to classifying the faculties of man—"spirit," "soul," "body"—it is not well to press the distinction beyond the popular into the strictly metaphysical sense. Paul would not imply that the body has certain sins of its own, in which spirit and soul have no responsibility; but, popularly considered, he would speak of some sins as of the body in point of the temptation to them, while others are of the mind only. I doubt if we gain any thing for

* τελειοσ.

practical purposes by attempting to draw any line between spirit and soul as used here. Paul meant to say—May all your powers —whether of mind or body—be brought under sanctifying grace, and so be kept true to their purpose, in harmony with your full consecration to God.

If the question be raised—Can we suppose that Paul meant what he has here said? I must reply that the question seems to me entirely impertinent and out of place. When inspired words stand before us, our first question asks for their exact significance: What did Paul, taught by the Spirit, really mean? This being found, it only remains to accept it as true and use it faithfully, honestly, prayerfully, to the ends for which it may seem to be written. How should we dare to treat the word of God otherwise than thus? If the question be whether it is proper to pray for such a degree of sanctification in the present life, it will not be out of place to suggest that we have yet higher authority than Paul's to pray for a degree of sanctification which surely can not be less than this: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."——Or if the still further question be pressed whether we can reasonably exercise faith in offering such prayer, we have the same question to settle in regard to this same Lord's prayer: Does he prescribe for us certain words of prayer and at the same time teach us (1) Always to pray in faith; yet (2) That it is *not* legitimate or suitable to have faith in offering the very prayer which himself has prescribed?

25. Brethren, pray for us.

26. Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss.

27. I charge you by the Lord, that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.

28. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

As I have expressed my prayers for you, so I now beseech you to pray in like manner for myself and my fellow-laborers in the gospel.

The solemn charge (v. 27) is unusual and seems to imply at least a shade of fear that some of the "disorderly" members of that church—men swept from their moorings by the fascinations of the exciting doctrine of the near coming of Christ, might repel the apostle's counsel and obstruct the public reading of this epistle. Hence this solemn injunction, resting on his authority as an apostle; and then his closing benediction.

EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

II.

INTRODUCTION.

How much time intervened between the first and this second letter can not be determined with entire precision. Obviously the same companions (Silvanus and Timothy) are still with him. Also similar external trials, apparently from hostile Jews, are indicated. (Compare Acts 18: 6 with 1 Thess. 2: 14–16 and 2 Thess. 1: 4 and 3: 3.) Inasmuch as Paul spent one year and a half at Corinth, and as 1 Thessalonians was with little doubt written there, quite early in this period, this second epistle may with great probability be put a few months later, and before he left Corinth to visit Asia Minor and especially Ephesus (Acts 18: 18). Somewhere in A. D. 53 we may assign the date of this epistle.

The special occasion was obviously of the same general character as that of the first—a feverish and pernicious excitement in regard to the speedy coming of the Lord, coupled with neglect of the common duties of life. The first epistle had failed to correct these erroneous notions; nay, it is perhaps probable that through their misconception of his meaning it may have even aggravated the evils. Hence this second epistle aimed to show them that the Lord's coming was *not* then near in the sense they were assuming; and that it was vital to their own spiritual welfare and to the honor of the gospel that they should be quiet; should devote themselves to the ordinary duties of life; earn their own bread by honest industry; and labor to restore to better views and a better life those who, in these respects, were walking disorderly.

One of the beautiful things in this epistle is the spirit of the apostle, manifested toward these erring brethren. We can not doubt that their crude notions, their wild excitement, their unteachable spirit, and their very objectionable ways of life, annoyed the apostle exceedingly; yet his forbearance

and good temper are wonderful. He sees all the good qualities that appear in the church; he thanks God for all that the gospel has wrought for them; he labors to comfort them under all their trials; and if some few prove incorrigible under all efforts to correct their errors and their wayward lives, he counsels the better brethren to withdraw unostentatiously from their society that they may feel the lack of moral support in their bad notions and bad lives, and so hopefully be led to wiser thought. But they were by no means to treat these erring ones as enemies, but rather to admonish them as brethren. Not a word of impatience with their dullness, or of contempt for their folly: nothing which would even suggest that he felt hurt by their lack of appreciation of his counsels escapes him. His genial, loving spirit bears him entirely above these feelings which unhappily appear but too often in smaller minds and less chastened souls—so that we may take some precious lessons from the great apostle on the gospel method of dealing with brethren of mistaken theories and fanatical spirit, yet who are not hopelessly false at heart, or lost toward God.

EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

II.

CHAPTER I.

Introduction (v. 1, 2); thanks to God for their growing faith and mutual love, and patience under persecution (v. 3, 4); which suggests that God righteously rewards his saints, but sends tribulation upon their persecutors (v. 5–8);—even everlasting destruction at and after Christ's second coming (v. 9, 10); prayers in their behalf (v. 11, 12).

1. Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

2. Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

This introduction is substantially the same as in the first epistle.

3. We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

4. So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

5. *Which is* a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

As usual in the New Testament, so here "charity" is precisely *love*—in this case love of the brethren. Their faith and love had developed so nobly that Paul and his associates were, in a sense, proud of such exemplary converts and commended their example to other churches as a model of faith and patience under persecution.

This fact (persecution) suggested how reasonable it was that God should visit both the persecutor and his victims, with righteous, discriminating awards—eternal blessedness to the latter—

they being counted worthy of that blessed kingdom for which they were here suffering.

6. Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;

7. And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

8. In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Inasmuch as it is righteous on God's part to requite with tribulation those who bring tribulation upon his people for nothing in them save their loyalty to God; and to you, the troubled ones, rest together with us, his apostles, when the Lord shall be revealed from heaven.——"His mighty angels" is literally the *angels of his might*—angels who embody and represent his own energy, and are therefore equal to any service to which he assigns them.——As to the agencies of this terrific destruction, we can only say that "fire" is almost universally the symbol as presented in the Scriptures, first of the Old Testament, and last of the New. In the Old we find it in Psalms 11: 6 and 50: 3; Dan. 7: 9, 10 and Isa. 33: 14 and Mal. 4: 1; and in the New, in Mark 9: 43, 44 and Matt. 25: 41 and 2 Pet. 3: 10, 12, etc. The attempts to improve upon these scriptural representations by discounting from their literal significance, and by questioning the possibilities or probabilities of the case, are of very questionable wisdom and value. Rather, it should be assumed that the Divine Spirit chose the best human language and imagery at command for the one purpose of being understood, and has not seriously missed his aim by a bad choice of imagery for his purpose.

"Them that know not God" and "them that obey not the gospel"—are here made two distinct classes by the defining Greek article prefixed to each. The first includes heathen, not enlightened as to the gospel, who yet "did not like to retain God in their knowledge," and therefore lived in guilty ignorance of what they might have known; while the second class had heard but would not obey the gospel of Jesus. Upon both classes, and upon each according to the measure of its guilt, will God take vengeance.

9. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

10. When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

"Destruction" can mean nothing less than the ruin of all hap-

piness and even of all hope. Of the elements of woe involved in it we can know (apparently) only what we may infer from these two general sources: (*a*) The laws of the human mind; and (*b*) the teachings of inspiration on the point of God's righteous displeasure against sinners; his threatenings as to their eternal doom; and his retributive judgments, administered on a limited but illustrative scale in this world.

To interpret this word "destruction" to mean annihilation—the extinction of being—is wholly in conflict with the obvious sense of the Scriptures. Such a doom could not with the least propriety be called everlasting. The word "aionios" as used here of this destruction has been regarded by the mass of sober critics ever since Paul wrote these words, as denoting a futurity extending onward in time without end.

The word "from" ("*from* the presence," etc.), like the Greek preposition * which it well translates, may in itself admit either of these two senses; *i. e.*, (*a*) to indicate the *source* whence the destruction comes; or (*b*) its *locality*, as being *far away from*—in this case, from the presence of the Lord. The latter is to be preferred here on two special grounds:—(1.) As harmonizing better with the word "presence" ("face") of the Lord, there being no particular pertinence in representing this destruction as coming from his face ("presence") as the *source* whence it proceeds; and (2) as harmonizing entirely with the very frequent representation of this punishment as involving utter banishment from God and from the home of his presence, purity and blessedness—*away* "into outer darkness": "without the city." Far away also "from the glory of his power"—the glory which emanates from the displays of his power and majesty.——These manifestations of the glory of his power will be made in their fullness when the Lord (Jesus) shall have come (for the final judgment) to be glorified in the person of his saints, and to be an object of admiring wonder as seen in the light of his saved people—their case exhibiting and unfolding marvelously the riches of his mercy and the glory of his power in their salvation.——It is proper (Paul would suggest) to call these things to your thought because ye believed our gospel testimony, and so were brought into the class of his saved people. Ye yourselves—enduring to the end—will be found in that illustrative host of the redeemed.

11. Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of *his* goodness, and the work of faith with power:

12. That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Unto which result we pray continually for you that our God

* *απο.*

would count you worthy of the gospel call, regarding your reception of it and your Christian life under it as responding worthily to your privileges.

In the clause—"all the good pleasure of his goodness," we must decide between referring these words to the good pleasure and goodness of God, or of man. Our translators took the former construction and indicated it by supplying the word "his" (God's). But the other construction, referring these words to man, is to be preferred on these two grounds; (*a*) The usage of the word ["goodness"]; and (*b*) The closely related clause following—"the work of faith"—which must certainly refer to man. ——As to the usage of the word for "goodness," * it is never used by Paul of God but only of man—the cases other than this being Rom. 15: 14 and Gal. 5: 22 and Eph. 5: 9. Moreover, all the other words of the clause are pertinent as applied to man —that God would fulfill every good purpose—every impulse toward moral goodness causing their fullest and most healthy development; and also the work of faith—all that faith can do in your souls—with power.

Verse 12 indicates that the results of this work of God's grace will glorify the name of Jesus in them, and exalt their souls to final glory in him—a mutual result, such as the grace of God is wont to achieve, and was provided in order to accomplish.

CHAPTER II.

Beseeches them not to be agitated by the expectation of the very near coming of the Lord (v. 1, 2); for the day will not come till there shall be a great apostasy and the man of sin shall appear whom he describes (v. 3, 4), of which he had told them before (v. 5): speaks of that which was detaining this manifestation (v. 6, 7); and of the coming and destruction of that Wicked One (v. 8), whose deceitful works are further described (v. 9, 10), and also God's righteous judgments in the destruction of himself and his deluded victims (v. 11, 12). But for his beloved, saved brethren he gives thanks to God (v. 13, 14); urges them to steadfastness in life and in the truth (v. 15), and gives expression to his prayers in their behalf (v. 16, 17).

1. Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him,

2. That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

In the exposition of this often controverted and often misinter-

* *αγαθωσυνη*.

preted passage (v. 1–12), it seems to me supremely important to adhere closely to *what is written* and to the legitimate sense of these words, unbiased by any preconceived theories whatever. No labor should be spared to ascertain definitely what his words must in themselves mean.

In the words—"By the coming"—our translators assume the sense of *adjuration:* we adjure you *by* that awful coming, etc. But this is never the sense of the Greek preposition used here. We must therefore take, instead, the well established sense *concerning—in respect to*—that expected coming. That you may better understand this coming and its necessary antecedents—I now write.——"And in respect to our being gathered together before him"—*i. e.*, when he shall come.——"That ye be not suddenly shaken"—in the sense of being agitated, disquieted, as opposed to a calm, settled mood of thought and feeling.——"In mind"—should rather be—*from* (or *out* of) your mind [nous]—your self-possession, your good sense so as to act as men who have lost their reason.——Nor yet be even so much as *troubled*, for which there is no occasion. "Troubled" represents a lower grade of anxiety, and disturbance of feeling.

Next, as to the *source* of this disturbance Do not be disturbed by any *spirit*—which in this connection must mean—by any one assuming to have the spirit of prophecy,—whether coming to you orally or by letter as if *from us*. This shows that some were pushing the doctrine of Christ's immediate appearing by claiming Paul's authority, either oral or written. This claim Paul repudiates as wholly unfounded. I never said so—never meant so; and I beseech you, let no assertion or even intimation to this effect disturb you, as implying that the day of the Lord is close upon us.

Paul's carefully chosen words—"*as if* the day of the Lord were at hand"—seem to imply—not that they affirmed Paul had said so, but that he must have *meant so*. They reached their conclusion by their special construction put upon his words. Paul therefore pointedly denies any such construction. And to protect himself, and the still dearer interests of truth, from such perversion and misapprehension, he alludes again below (v. 15) to the things they had been taught by his words and letters, beseeching them to hold fast these truths and the words in which they lay, and to hold them without perversion. Yet more, in closing this epistle, he is careful to put his own autograph to it as the token of his own hand—a precaution which significantly implies that his authority had been tampered with in a way by no means pleasant.

The verb translated, "*is at hand*," indicates an event very near, standing directly in upon us. It is used not infrequently for things present as opposed to things absent in the sense of remote in time future (*e. g.*, Rom. 8: 38 and 1 Cor. 3: 22).

3. Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day*

shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

4. Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

Let no man deceive you *by any means whatever*, for Paul had specified several of these means of misleading their minds; and now, lest there might yet be some possible points omitted, he gives his admonition the widest scope, to guard against every possible method of deception which could mislead them from the truth.

The reader will notice that the clause, "that day shall not come," is in italics, indicating that no corresponding words appear in the original. Yet the words that follow, as well as those which precede, fully justify the introduction of these italic words.

The reader should be reminded that Paul said—not "a falling away," but *the* falling away, *the* well known, great apostasy, of which you have been told often. This doctrine of a great apostasy, at some time, was currently taught by all the apostles—by Paul, 1 Tim. 4: 1 and 2 Tim. 3: 1; by Peter, 2 Eps. 2: 1; and by John, 1 Eps. 2: 18 and 4: 3.

Paul proceeds to describe yet further the salient features of this great apostasy—viz., in the appearing and coming into bold prominence of "*the man of sin.*" Let us hold well in mind that this is Paul's first descriptive designation, "*The man of sin.*" His one distinctive, decisive characteristic is *sin*—wickedness. He is a man of towering, appalling wickedness; a sinner of the blackest dye; a head-rebel against God, of most daring impiety. And, let it be noted, he is *one man*, a single individual. It would be an unpardonable violation of all just laws of language to make him an abstract system of wickedness instead of a concrete sinner; or a long succession of men, as (*e. g.*) the popes of Rome, instead of one man only.——This strict defining of the man as an individual is made yet stronger by the next descriptive point—a clause in apposition—viz., "the son of perdition," a man born for destruction, who by good right inherits perdition. It should be borne in mind that our Lord uses these identical words of Judas (John 17: 12). Judas was one individual man; so, therefore, is this "man of sin."——Let it also be noticed that Paul says of this "man of sin," "shall be *revealed*"—the very same word which is customarily used for the revelation of the Son of man in the sense of his manifestation before human eyes.——Some of his very descriptive points are put in v. 4. He sets himself against and lifts himself above every one called God, every thing worshiped—a statement made purposely broad enough to include both Christian and pagan objects of worship, the true God and false gods also. (Compare here 1 Cor. 8: 5). For the word "sebasma," an object of pagan worship, see Acts 17: 23. This "man of sin" thus lifts himself above all objects of human worship, known or conceivable, whether the true God or the false

gods of the heathen.——Yet more; he thrusts himself into the very temple of God and sits down there, purposely obtruding himself upon mankind as alone worthy of all worship. Instead of saying, "*in* the temple," Paul says *into* the temple, which seems to imply his thrusting himself into it, and there taking his seat as one rightly there, showing himself off as being really the supreme God.——What particular temple of God is here referred to, it is not easy to decide. May it be the church of God, which is often spoken of as his temple? But in this sort of description, a figurative sense of the word seems inappropriate.—Is it the old Jewish temple? There are difficulties in supposing that to be in existence at the time referred to. May it be an ideal temple—*i. e.*, any place consecrated to the worship of God—to thrust one's self into which and sit down there, would be to assume the rights and prerogatives of real divinity? This seems to be the least objectionable construction. But the decision of this point is by no means of vital moment.

On the distinct personality of this "man of sin," Ellicott remarks: "He is no mere set of principles, or succession of opponents, but is one single personal being, as truly man as he whom he impiously opposes."

Much has been written to identify this "man of sin" with the popes of Rome. It ought to be a sufficient refutation of all such expositions: (1.) That this "man of sin" is not a legion of men following each other in long succession for twelve or more centuries, but is unquestionably one man, and but one. If descriptive terms are allowed to have any meaning; if the whole tenor of a description, involving numerous distinct points, all defining one man, shall be allowed their legitimate force, there is no evading this conclusion. (2.) On the point of assuming divine honors—thrusting himself into the very temple of God and showing off himself to be God—it were at once false and foul to claim that the popes answer to this description. Men who charge such impiety upon the popes should at least be invited to reconsider the charge in the light of the ninth commandment.

5. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

So it seems these points had been spoken of definitely while Paul was among them.

6. And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

7. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way.

This "now" seems to mean accordingly, consequently; and not the present time as distinct from any other—*i. e.*, is logical, not temporal in sense. Ye know what holds him back, restrains, detains him from manifesting himself, unto the result of his being

manifested in his own proper time, and not before it. But what Paul alludes to as known to his readers is by no means very clear at this distance of time. Was it the power of organized society which held in check such arrant impiety?

This definite time is the fitting season—so called, apparently, with reference to the divine purpose—the time arranged for in the plan of God.

Yet further he says that this mysterious iniquity—this astounding embodiment of sin—was already in energetic action as an under current, not coming up prominently to the surface—the withholding power still detaining his manifestations until it should be taken away.

The translators of our version disregarded one good rule in translating the same Greek word "*withholdeth*" in v. 6 and "letteth" in v. 7. In each case the word is a participle, yet is the same in every respect save that in v. 6 it is neuter—the withholding *thing* or *power;* and in v. 7, masculine; the withholding one.——"Letteth," of course, is in the sense now mostly obsolete —meaning not *permit*, but prevent, restrain.——But what this withholding, restraining power or personage was, who can tell? The general tenor of Paul's language seems to imply that it was somewhat definitely known then, and that it was not very remote in time. More mystery hangs over these points than over any other in the entire passage. Whatever might be said about the mystery of his working then, the mystery is indefinitely greater, it would seem, to-day.

8. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

And *then*—this word being obviously emphatic—*then* when the restraining personage shall be out of the way, will "the man of sin—the lawless One—certainly the same personage described above (v. 3)—come to the front and be revealed to the view of the world. But here, without another word at this point as to his operations; without a hint as to the amount of time which his working should occupy, Paul proceeds at once to show how the Lord will meet him with his consuming judgments:—"Whom the Lord" (*i. e.*, Jesus Christ)—the better text gives it "the Lord Jesus"—"shall consume with the breath of his mouth"—in allusion probably to the words of Isaiah (11: 1); "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked:"—"And shall annihilate"—dispose of utterly—"in the blaze of his coming."——But what "coming" is this? Is it Christ's second and final coming, or may it be some long prior manifestation of retributive judgment, of local and limited character?

This question is so very vital to the bearing of our whole passage upon the time and the immediate antecedents of the second

and final coming that no pains should be spared to arrive at the true interpretation.

The evidence in the case must be sought in two lines of inquiry: (1) The usage of Paul's words; (2) The exigencies of the whole argument.

(1) As to the words, The term for "brightness" [epiphaneia] which Greek word is transferred to our tongue in *Epiphany*, is used by Paul once of Christ's first coming (2 Tim. 1: 10); but in every other case, of his final coming, the following being all the cases of its usage:—1 Tim. 6: 14 and 2 Tim. 4: 1, 8 and Titus 2: 13.——With these cases of usage before us, it is impossible to justify the application of the passage to any thing except Christ's final coming.——So of the other word for coming—"parousia"—which the strain of current usage compels us, in a connection like this, to refer to Christ's final coming.

(2) The exigencies of the entire argument bear in the same direction and to the same point. For in this entire passage Paul is speaking not of antecedent comings in retributive judgment, but of the great final coming of the Lord, of the very "day of the Lord" about which the Thessalonian brethren had been so agitated, supposing it to be close upon them even then. Beyond all question this is the theme under discussion—the matter of which Paul is writing.——Then further, he declares that this coming will not take place until a certain Impious One shall have been revealed. "The man of sin," "the son of perdition," "the lawless one," must needs come first. Something retards his manifestation now; but when he shall have come, then the Lord Jesus shall blaze forth upon him in the brightness and glory of his final coming; and so the end shall be!——Thus the destruction of this lawless One—this gigantic sinner—and the final coming of the Lord Jesus to judgment, are synchronous. This identical coming of the Lord is the very agency which destroys that monster of wickedness.

9. *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

10. And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

Paul resumes and expands his description of the work wrought by this giant sinner and deceiver. His "coming" (which remarkably is the very word *parousia*, so commonly used of Christ's coming) is in accord with, and according to, the working of Satan. He works under Satan and after the manner of Satan—is Satan's chief human instrument and ally. Of course it must follow that this man of sin is not Satan himself. But he works after the methods and upon the policy of Satan, specially in the point of pretended miracles, which this group of terms—"every sort of powers and signs and wonders"—invariably denotes. Here they

are *lying* wonders; mere pretensions to miracles.——With every form of wicked deceit, acting and effective upon those who are destined to perish because they have not received the truth in love so that they might be saved.——To admit into the soul the love of the truth is vital to human salvation. Men who will not receive the truth in love but repel it with hate, who "hate the light because their deeds are evil," debar themselves from all possibility of being saved, and doom themselves by the sternest necessity to final destruction.

11. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:
12. That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

For this cause God sends (not "shall send")—but present tense—sends upon them the energy [power] of delusion—an energetic, mighty delusion, unto their believing the lie—that false thing—so that all they who believe not the truth but take pleasure in iniquity, may be condemned. This is Paul's view of the ultimate reason why God does and must give over self-deceived sinners to utter and remediless ruin.

The explanation is suggested by the case of those who have been deceived to their ruin by the delusive wiles of this great deceiver—"the man of sin and son of perdition."

Before we pass on from this remarkable passage, it will perhaps be expected that some definite view will be hazarded as to the identity of this "man of sin"—on the questions—Who is he? Has he yet come?

For the double purpose of distinctness on the one hand and of brevity on the other, I make these points:

1. This man of sin is a *real man*—not an ideal one, nor any ideal entity. Moreover he is *one* man; not an indefinite succession of men.

2. He must needs come before Christ's final advent. This is beyond question.

3. Yet not indefinitely long before, but only immediately before—so close upon the time of Christ's final coming that this very coming will be the agency and of course, therefore, the hour of his destruction.

4. Consequently, this lawless One—"the man of sin"—has not come yet. All attempts to make out Nero the man, or the popes of Rome to be, all combined, the one man of sin are utterly precluded.

5. Doubtless when he does come his well defined characteristics will reveal him to the world beyond mistake or doubt. Once revealed, none will be able to doubt his identity with this description.

6. Paul may have been enlightened by the Spirit to say all he has said here, yet may not have been told when, reckoned on the

calendar, the man of sin and the second coming of the Lord would occur. The Spirit may have given Paul certain immediately antecedent facts and events, and yet may not have given him at all the dates, and perhaps not even a clear general impression of the distance in time to the appearing of the man of sin and to the coming of the Lord for his destruction.

7. That there are limits to the knowledge imparted by inspiration must be admitted and assumed; for inspiration never reaches omniscience. Some things would surely lie beyond its range of imparted knowledge.

8. The very explicit teachings of Jesus himself suffice to show absolutely that one of the never-to-be-revealed things, lying therefore beyond the range of inspiration, was the precise date of the second and final coming. Two declarations, essentially identical upon this point, suffice for proof: viz., (*a.*) "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels that are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13: 32, also Matt. 24: 36).——(*b.*) "It is not for you (inspired apostles) to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power" (Acts 1: 7).

9. Hence the answer to our question, Who is this man of sin? and *When* will he appear? must lie over till he comes.

10. It is perhaps worthy of inquiry whether this great apostasy may not be identical with that of which John speaks (Rev. 20: 7–10). That of John followed the loosing of Satan and was worked by his energy. In this of Paul, the coming and its results were according to the working of Satan. In both deceit was the prominent agency. In Paul's account, fire is the means indicated for his destruction: "Whom the Lord shall *consume*" —"shall destroy with the *brightness*" [possibly the blaze] "of his coming:" while John says—"Fire comes down from God out of heaven and destroys him;"—and finally in both cases, this destruction seems to immediately precede Christ's coming to the last judgment.

The striking similarity in these salient points supplies material for thought—perhaps we ought to say for speculation—for a modest reserve should make us slow to form positive conclusions.

13. But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

14. Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

15. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

Obviously this allusion to the brethren is suggested by the striking contrast between their case—beloved of the Lord—and those godless men not beloved;—their case chosen unto salva-

tion, and those upon whom "God sends strong delusion:"—their case saved through belief of the truth under the Spirit's light; and the case of those who received not the love of the truth so that God could save them. No contrast could be more complete, more wide, and practically more instructive. There is nothing here to indicate that God would not have saved the first described class if they would have received the truth in love; if they would have believed as well as loved it, instead of having pleasure in unrighteousness. But how could he save men who hated light and would not come to it; who loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil, and they chose evil before good?

How the divine purpose toward the saved class was carried into effect is fully shown here—viz., "through sanctification by the Spirit and through their believing the truth"—unto which sanctification and faith God had called them by the preached gospel to the end of their obtaining the glorious inheritance proffered by the Lord.——Therefore let them stand firm, and hold the instructions—better than "traditions," because this word has been so much used in the Pharisaic sense. The meaning is —what they had been taught by the apostles, whether orally or by letter. This exhortation was called for—presumably—by the erratic tendencies of certain enthusiasts among them who seem not to have held fast the words of Paul—at least, not in their legitimate sense.

16. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,

17. Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

This prayer is pertinently addressed to Christ and to the Father as having loved them and given them everlasting consolation. "Everlasting" in the sense of perpetual, unfailing, lifelong—yet apparently without special reference to the future world. Both this "consolation" and this "good hope" may have allusion to their groundless anxiety and sorrow over their sainted dead, referred to 1 Thess. 4: 13–18.——"In every good word and work," with some emphasis on the word "good," in contrast with other words and works of questionable sort. Only in the good should we ever expect real comfort, or pray to be established.

CHAPTER III.

Requests their prayers and for what objects (v. 1.2); coupled with expressions of confidence (v. 3, 4); and his own prayers for them (v. 5); injunctions respecting discipline of the disorderly (v. 6); enforced by reference to apostolic example (v. 7–9); the point of disorder being neglect of useful labor (v. 10–12); how to treat offenders (v. 13–15) with closing prayer and salutations (v. 16–18).

1. Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have *free* course, and be glorified, even as *it is* with you:

2. And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men, for all *men* have not faith.

The brethren addressed would readily understand this allusion to "unreasonable and wicked men," the same doubtless who followed Paul, dogging his steps from Thessalonica to Berea (Acts 17: 5–9, 13); who were upon him again in Corinth (Acts 18: 12); and who gave him no rest whenever he touched Judea (Acts 21: 27–31 and Rom. 15: 31). Very unreasonable men were those; never "pleasing God and contrary to all men" (1 Thess. 2: 15). Paul had suffered every thing short of death at their bloody hands.

3. But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep *you* from evil.

The Lord has not only promised freely and abundantly, but he is faithful to his promises—all unlike those Godless persecutors who have no faith.——"Who will keep you from—not evil in the abstract but the Evil One, *i. e.*, the devil." So this clause should obviously be translated. The proof of this turns on usage and on the context.

It may be useful to classify the cases of New Testament usage in which this adjective * meaning *evil*, is used in the singular with the article—*the* Evil One or *the* evil thing—as the gender may be either masculine or neuter. The masculine [the Evil One] is certainly Satan. The neuter gender denotes evil in the abstract.

In four cases the article is certainly masculine, and the reference is therefore to Satan; viz., Matt. 13: 19. "Then cometh the wicked one"—*i. e.*, Satan:—also 1 John 2: 13, 14—"because ye have overcome the wicked one"—Satan. So v. 14.——And 1 John 5: 18: "He that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one (the devil) toucheth him not."——Then we find a group of cases in which the gender may (as to form) be either

* πονῆρος.

masculine or neuter, leaving the question of allusion to Satan open, to be determined by the nature of the case. On this principle, the following passages should be translated—the devil—viz., Matt. 5: 37: "Let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay:—for whatsoever is more than these [in the direction of the profane oath] cometh of the devil." Matt. 6: 13—"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the devil." Matt. 13: 38—"The tares are the children of the devil." John 17: 15—"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the devil." John 3: 12—"Not as Cain who was of the devil and slew his brother." Add the passage now before us.

Over against this group is another—a very small one where the context forbids an allusion to the devil:—viz., Matt. 5: 39 where we must not read—"I say unto you that ye resist not the devil;" and 1 Cor. 5: 13 where "put away from yourselves that wicked person," can not be Satan but must be the man guilty of incest. This classification shows a great preponderance of cases in which this word for "evil" must refer to the evil one, Satan, beyond all reasonable question.

4. And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

5. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

"Direct your *heart*"—this word representing the moral will-power—into or unto the loving of God:—and into the *patience* of Christ, this being the meaning of Paul's word, and not a patient waiting for Christ. The words of Paul mean a patience under suffering like that of Jesus himself.

6. Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

Notice that this is not advice but "command" and enforced by the name—*i. e.*, the authority of the Lord Jesus. This disorderly walking is shown by the context to be the neglect of useful labor—not working at all upon any thing useful, but being "busy-bodies"—active enough, but active upon nothing of value toward subsistence or the improvement of society. Of course these men must needs eat like other people; and therefore throw themselves upon the unrequited labor of men of more sober mind and better life.——From such men Paul commands the brethren to withdraw their Christian fellowship.

7. For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

8. Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but

wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:

9. Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

The example of Paul and his fellow-laborers had in this respect been one of patient industry and mainly one of self-support. Paul recognized fully his right as an apostle and as a preacher of the gospel to be supported by the people whom his labors had so richly blessed. He is now writing from Corinth where he lived with Aquila and Priscilla and wrought with them in the manufacture of tents (Acts 18: 1–3), and where he had occasion to discuss the principles now in hand and to put forth his reasons for waiving his rights as a minister, and throwing himself upon his personal toil for his living. (See 1 Cor. 9 and 2 Cor. 11: 7–12 and 12: 13–18.)

10. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

11. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

12. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

Useful labor is never a curse to society, but always a blessing. Those wild enthusiasts who assume that their enthusiasm exempts them from self-support, and entitles them to live upon the toil of others, violate the law of love egregiously, and what is perhaps worst of all—aggravate that very wildness of enthusiasm which is at once their calamity and their crime. Useful labor conduces toward the even balance of the mind and the controlling power of good sense.

It should not be overlooked that this case of disorderly walking at Thessalonica was due to the abuse and perversion of the doctrine of Christ's coming. It therefore shows that God never intended the nearness of that coming (whether real or only supposed) should be so held as to exempt men from honest labor for an honest living. The common duties of life are never to be neglected or even disturbed by the prophetic appointments of men for the coming of that day.

13. But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.

14. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

15. Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother.

Withdraw socially from that disorderly brother; let him feel

that he has no moral support from his brethren. This may take the pride out of him and put him upon sober reflection. Yet treat him not as an enemy, but rather admonish him as still a brother whose welfare you seek, whose soul you love, and whom you would reclaim and save. The spirit of these precepts is most admirable—so truly Christ-like; so well adapted to save, so profoundly wise.

16. Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord *be* with you all.

17. The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.

18. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

"The Lord of peace" is none other than he who said most sweetly to his disciples:—"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you" (John 14: 27). It was morally beautiful in Paul to commend his brethren to this Great Giver of peace for those blessings of peace which the exercise of wholesome discipline might put in jeopardy.

This calling of special attention to his autograph signature (v. 17) to certify his letters, suggests that some special occasion existed in that church. That in the presence of such occasion and of so many circumstances adapted to disturb Paul's equanimity, try his temper and provoke an unloving spirit, he should yet evince such sweetness, gentleness, patience, self-control and rich Christian charity, is indeed an example at once delightful and morally sublime.

THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

INTRODUCTION.

The points appropriate to an introduction bearing in general upon the three pastoral epistles (Timothy I. and II. and Titus) but in particular upon I. Timothy are:

I. The personal history of Timothy;
II. Authorship of these epistles;
III. Date, including all three;
IV. The occasion and scope of the epistle now in hand.

I. Timothy was apparently of Lystra, a city of Lycaonia. His father was a Greek; his mother a Jewess, Eunice by name, first brought to view in Scripture history (Acts 16: 1–3). Inasmuch as at this point he was already a disciple of well-established reputation, it is highly probable that he was converted under Paul's labors during his first visit to this place (Acts 14: 6). Taken now by Paul (Acts 16: 1–5) as his assistant and fellow-laborer, he seems to have been with him at Thessalonica; driven out with him to Berea; left there with Silas (Acts 17: 14) while Paul went on to Athens; probably rejoining him there (Acts 17: 16) and sent from that city to Thessalonica (1 Thess. 3: 1, 2),—returning to the apostle however to find him at Corinth (Acts 18: 5). He appears next with Paul at Ephesus on his third great missionary tour; was sent forward thence into Macedonia (Acts 19: 22) and also to Corinth (1 Cor. 4: 17); was with Paul in Macedonia when he wrote 2 Corinthians (1: 1), and at Corinth when he wrote thence to the Romans (Rom. 16: 21); accompanied him from Corinth into Asia on his way to Jerusalem (Acts 20: 4); is with him again during his two years' confinement at Rome as appears from the letters written there to the Philippians (1: 1), Colossians (1: 1) and Philemon (v. 1).

At a point considerably later, he appears in this epistle of Paul to himself, left at Ephesus when Paul went into

Macedonia, yet sent for to come to Paul near the close of his second epistle and of his life.——It thus appears that his associations with Paul spanned from first to last a period of seventeen years (A. D. 51–68), in which though not constantly with him, he was yet serving with him in the gospel, intrusted often with special missions, enjoying his fullest confidence, and being at least among his most valued and most useful fellow-laborers.——Eusebius (H. E. 3: 4) speaks of him as first bishop of Ephesus. He is said to have suffered martyrdom under Diocletian.

II. I see no objection of any force whatever against the authorship of Paul. Certain hypercritics have said that these letters are very unlike Paul's other letters, *i. e.*, to churches—in the points of logical connection of parts—these being very miscellaneous in subject, while those are logically constructed; these evincing none of that remarkable depth of thought which characterize those—entering into no great discussion (as those do) of fundamental gospel truth:—in short that they have a very different air, and therefore indicate a different author.——All this criticism strangely ignores the difference between writing to churches, as yet crude on the great themes of gospel doctrine, and writing to a brother minister, for seventeen years associated with himself in gospel study and teaching—a fellow-laborer mature in Christian character and also in Christian doctrine. ——Besides, Paul is older now than he was when he was writing epistles to the churches. The experiences of twenty or more years of missionary travel and toil, with scourgings, fastings, shipwreck, imprisonment, cares that never ceased; heart-burdens, perplexities, anxieties, perhaps never borne to such an extent by any other man—may have left traces of wear upon his physical frame, sufficient to excuse him from profound, elaborate theological discussion, especially when not called for. It were a mere impertinence to object to the genuineness of these pastoral epistles that they contain only those points of instruction and counsel which circumstances made necessary and do not repeat the theological discussions which were in place in the epistles to the Romans and also to the Galatians and to the Ephesians. It is noticeable that Paul has not lost his common sense, however it may be with his critics.

III. The question of *date* involves the broader question respecting the main historic facts of the last five or six years of Paul's life, intervening between his release from his first

imprisonment (about A. D. 62) and his death which closed his second—supposably in the spring of A. D. 68.

Luke's narrative ends (Acts 28), with the two years of Paul's first imprisonment at Rome.

The data for making up Paul's personal history during these six last years of his life are:

(*a.*) Certain notices of his purposes—which are to a certain extent confirmed by testimony from the Christian fathers:

(*b.*) Sundry allusions in these pastoral epistles to localities in which he is seen, and also to the doctrinal errors then prevalent in these churches.

(*c.*) Testimonies from the Christian fathers.

Giving a few moments to these sources of testimony, under (*a.*) we have an expressed purpose (Rom. 15: 24, 28) to visit Spain. This purpose does not of itself prove that he actually went, but it renders this visit probable. The fact is put beyond reasonable doubt by the testimony of several of the earliest Christian fathers. (See Smith's Bible Dictionary, under "Paul," pp. 2394, 2395).——Moreover, in his letter to the Philippians, written during his first imprisonment at Rome, he twice expresses great assurance in the Lord that he should yet and ere long revisit them: "I know that I shall abide (in the flesh) and continue with you all" (1: 24); "I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly" (2: 25). There is at least a strong *a priori* probability that these expectations were realized.——A similar expectation of visiting Colosse, the residence of Philemon, appears in Philemon (v. 22).

(*b.*) Under this head the argument is that somewhat numerous allusions in these pastoral epistles presuppose journeys made by Paul and residences more or less protracted at various places, for which no room can be made during his known life, antecedent to his first imprisonment, and which suffice to fill up the years quite well known to have intervened between his release from his first imprisonment and his death which terminated his second.——Thus he had been at Ephesus in connection with Timothy and left him there to go himself to Macedonia (1 Tim. 1: 3). He purposed to return to Ephesus again (1 Tim. 4: 13). He had spent considerable time there, enjoying the friendly ministrations of Onesiphorus (2 Tim. 1: 16).——His letter to Titus, written near the date of 1 Timothy shows that he had been to Crete and had left Titus there. He speaks in this

letter of a purpose to spend the winter at Nicopolis (Titus 3: 12). His second to Timothy shows that he had left Erastus at Corinth (of course had been there himself); at Miletum also, where he left Trophimus sick; at Troas where he left what is called a "cloak" and also "the books and the parchments."——As to the circumstances of his imprisonment, it appears that he was in bonds as a malefactor (2 Tim. 2: 9), very unlike the circumstances of his first imprisonment, in which some respect was shown him as a Roman citizen, against whom, moreover, no grave charges had been brought. Also that in his first hearing before the Roman authorities (supposably before Nero) the Lord stood by him for his strength, though all men forsook him; so that his hopes revived of yet preaching the gospel more fully; and he "was delivered out of the mouth of the lion" (2 Tim. 4: 16–18).——All these circumstances presuppose the lapse of considerable periods of time and the occurrence of events too many and too large historically to find place in his life-history before his first imprisonment;—which assume an interval of some years between his first imprisonment and his second; and which represent the second to have been widely unlike the first.

To this should be added the much more full development of incipient heresies, especially at Ephesus. He foresaw these developments when he met those elders at Miletus (Acts 20: 29, 30): "For I know that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you," etc. At the date of his first letter to Timothy, these prophetic forecastings had become but too palpable facts: "I besought thee to remain still at Ephesus that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine." These circumstances indicate a considerable lapse of time.

(*c.*) The testimonies of early church historians bear specially upon these two points: (1) Of his preaching in Spain to which reference is made above; and (2) To the circumstances of his death. The latter are given in Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, pp. 2399:—in substance, from Clement of Rome, supposed to have been once with Paul (Phil. 4: 3); from Dionysius, bishop of Corinth (A. D. 170); from Caius of Rome of the second century; and from Tertullian (A. D. 200):—all to the effect that Paul was beheaded under Nero, in the spring of A. D.68, near the time when Peter suffered martyrdom, and not long before Nero's own death. These points stand among the undisputed facts of early church

history.——Conybeare and Howson, in appendix to Vol. II., discuss fully the questions of the genuineness and date of these epistles.

IV. The occasion and scope of these epistles are obvious. Primarily instructing Timothy to head off incipient heresies, but secondly and in general, to supervise church work; to induct into office suitable pastors and deacons; to promote sound morality and intrinsic righteousness; to build up the brethren in their most holy faith.——That these epistles should take up and treat these various themes miscellaneously is in every point of view legitimate and to be expected. They afford us an admirable exemplification of Paul's ideal of the Christian church, showing what he labored to make them—lights in the world, holding forth the light of a pure morality, and of an efficient and glorious Christianity. He believed in church organization and church authority, not as an end in itself, but as a necessary means to this one supreme end—a pure Christian life.

THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

CHAPTER I.

Introductory greetings (v. 1, 2); reasons for leaving Timothy at Ephesus (v. 3, 4) which suggests that the true end and aim of the law is love (v. 5); how some have misconceived this, and the consequences (v. 6, 7); for what class of sinners law is enacted (v. 8–11). The great grace of God in Paul's conversion and call to the ministry (12–14) and the moral lessons of this wonderful conversion (v. 15–17); on Timothy's call to the ministry, with Christian counsels (v. 18–20).

1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Savior, and Lord Jesus Christ, *which is* our hope;

2. Unto Timothy, *my* own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, *and* peace, from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord.

That Paul writing to Timothy should introduce himself as "an apostle" was not due to any sense of the need of asserting his authority for Timothy's sake, but to the official character of the letter. It was appropriate for an apostle to assign Christian work to his associated laborers.——Paul held his apostolic commission by special appointment of God and of the Lord Jesus, our Supreme Hope—the ultimate ground of it all. It is not usual to speak of God as "our Savior," yet there are cases other than this. Its pertinence lies in the fact that "God so loved the world as to give us Jesus his Son."——"Unto Timothy, my own son"—literally and primarily, "my *born* son," my son by birth; but in the secondary sense, my real son—one whose filial relations are genuine, unquestionable. In this case, "my son *in the faith*," *i. e.*, in the sphere of Christian belief and life—my spiritual child, begotten of God unto holiness through my instrumentality.

3. As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,

4. Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: *so do.*

These circumstances have been sufficiently treated in the introduction.——"That they teach no other doctrine whatsoever;" for the gospel doctrine is of necessity exclusive of every other. Its nature forbids any partnership with other systems.——"Fables and endless genealogies"—are unquestionably of Jewish type, as may be seen in the more full description (Titus 1: 14 and 3: 9) where Paul calls them "Jewish fables;" also foolish questions and genealogies and strivings about the law. Even a very slight acquaintance with the Talmud will abundantly justify these descriptive points of Jewish teaching in that age—surprisingly frivolous and even silly, ministering questions in plenty—anything rather than edifying men in that godliness which is through faith. The gospel scheme and the scheme of effete Judaism were on all these vital points, "wide as the poles apart."——Remarkably the Greek word for "edifying" (oikonomia)—a word which suggests household economy—looks rather to the edification of the church than of individuals. Paul would suggest that effete Judaism supplied but miserable elements for building up the church of God in his most holy faith. It is an easy inference that what is worthless for the church can have no value for the individual Christian.

5. Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and *of* a good conscience, and *of* faith unfeigned:

These men make great account of *the* law—*i. e.*, as given by Moses. But to understand the value of the law and so of any teaching of it, you must consider well its ultimate end and aim—what the law seeks to accomplish. To this point, therefore, Paul wisely turns.——The first word of v. 5 should not be "now," for it signifies neither time nor logical relation, in the sense of consequently, but is slightly adversative ["de"]—best expressed by "but." But, all unlike the Jewish system as taught by them, the commandment has for its true end, not questions and endless genealogies to no useful edifying, but real *love*. "Charity," of course in the broad sense (now mostly obsolete) of real love, good will to men. To identify and more fully describe this love, Paul says it is the natural product of a pure (unselfish) heart—a good (not a misguided, untaught, but a well-informed and honest) conscience; and of faith, not pretentious and Pharisaical, but unfeigned and sincere.

6. From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;

7. Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

Paul's word for "swerved" implies missing the mark, losing sight of their pole-star, turning aside from the right way [of love] into vain, profitless jangling, disputations that contribute nothing toward love, but much toward discord and ill temper. Noticeably, Paul's word assumes also that they are voluntary and therefore culpable, and not merely unfortunate in this swerving.—— Ambitious to be distinguished and honored as "lawyers" in the New Testament sense—"doctors of the law;" but wholly without qualifications, for they understand neither *what* the law affirms nor *why*.

8. But we know that the law *is* good, if a man use *it* lawfully;

9. Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

10. For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men-stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

11. According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

We all know, every one must admit, that the law—that given by Moses, which is certainly spoken of here—is intrinsically good and will be of service if used legitimately according to its design. Whatever criticism Paul ever had to make upon the abuses of that law, he always admitted its inherent goodness and its utility toward the ends which itself contemplated. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good. We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal. I consent unto the law that it is good." (Rom. 7: 12, 14, 16.) But to understand what "using it lawfully" means, we must consider ["knowing this"] that this law is not enacted for the special benefit of the righteous man, but for the benefit of sinners, whom he proceeds to classify and enumerate. Paul means to show that the law was designed to be a schoolmaster to lead men to Christ—a rule of life that should avail to convict men of sin, enforcing upon their souls a sense of their need of forgiveness. Its manifold specification of offenses would have been quite needless if all men had been righteous. In this sense it was enacted for these and similar sinners.——Moreover, it was not enacted for the righteous man as a rule of life, by following which he might insure God's favor and gain heaven as his reward. Whether such obedience, *if perfect*, would have resulted in the reward of heaven, is not, as to our fallen race, a practical question. It was not needful, therefore, for Paul to discuss it. As to righteousness in the Pharisaic sense, he had not the least faith that, however punctilious, however in-

tense, it could at all fit men for heaven.——Passing this point, we have the momentous truth that the law is good as a rule of moral conduct; good to convict men of their sins: good to enforce a sense of personal need of Christ, but not good as a means of personal salvation, and most of all powerless when interpreted in the Pharisaic sense.

These specifications of godless character and of godless men need little comment.—Of the "lawless and refractory," the former are the more passive; the latter the more active: the former regardless of law; the latter restive and rebellious under it. Of "the ungodly and sinners," the former are unworshipful, having no reverence for God and no proclivity toward worship, while the latter are in their whole character offenders, violators of law. As to "the unholy and the profane," the former lack conformity to God, while the latter lack even the common impulses of our better humanity.

"*Murderers* of fathers and of mothers" should rather have been translated "*strikers*," this being what the etymology of the word calls for, from the verb to thresh, to smite. Paul refers to the law of Moses (Ex. 21: 15): "He that smiteth his father or his mother shall surely be put to death." The crime of parricide is rare. Extreme disrespect, overt abuse of parents, is the sin referred to.——"Men-stealers," kidnapers of their fellow-men into slavery, was one class of criminals condemned by the law of Moses. "He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, shall surely be put to death" (Ex. 21: 16). ——After many specifications, Paul says comprehensively: If there be any thing else contrary to sound doctrine as revealed in that gospel which sets forth the glorious purity and love of the blessed God, the law condemns that. This is the gospel committed to my trust as an apostle and a divinely commissioned teacher of most precious truth.

12. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

13. Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief.

14. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

The thought of his gospel trust fires the soul of this aged apostle, who will never be too old to kindle under its inspirations. O what thanks and praises do I owe and would I render for ever to Jesus my Lord who hath clothed me with spiritual power [the sense of the word for "enabled"]—hath *empowered* me by the energies of his Spirit, because he accounted me faithful, and so put me into this gospel ministry, even me who previously had been a blasphemer (*i. e.*, against the name of Christ), even compelling

his disciples to blaspheme (Acts 26: 9, 11).—"And injurious," the Greek word combining the ideas of insolence and wanton injury; the spirit of one regardless of the feelings, welfare, and rights of his fellow-men. Paul has no soft apologetic words for his godless, Pharisaic life.——But I who had shown no mercy to others did yet (strange to say!) find mercy myself; though this may be said: I never should but for the circumstance that I sinned ignorantly, in unbelief. I did not then believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah promised to our nation.

We need not suppose that Paul held himself guiltless for this unbelief; but only that it somewhat lessened his guilt. If he had sinned against greater light, his guilt would have been correspondingly greater; and if much greater, might have shut him off from mercy for ever.

God's "grace was exceedingly abundant"—abounded and superabounded—one of Paul's very expressive words, which yet seems to labor almost in vain to utter the fullness of his overflowing soul.

15. This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

16. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Christ Jesus might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

17. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, *be* honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Paul passes by easy transition from the particular, his own case, to the general—the great, the comprehensive, and most blessed truth, that Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

This is "a faithful word"—a phrase used by Paul only; and remarkably, only in these pastoral epistles. This fact suggests that the phrase may have become crystallized into his style with the lapse of time. It appears in 1 Tim. 3: 1 and 4: 9, and 2 Tim. 2: 11 and Tit. 3: 8.

"Worthy of all acceptation"—by every man, everywhere, over all the world, and onward through all the ages.——"Of whom I am chief"—in the front rank, first and foremost; for who has ever sinned more or worse than I?——Yet this was one reason why I obtained mercy, viz., that in me—not "first" in time, but in me *chiefly*—in me as a most signal, illustrious example, Christ might show forth all his long-suffering mercy—the whole of it—making a richer display than could be possible toward a sinner of less guilt.——The translation "first" ["that in me first"] is unfortunate and quite inaccurate, the Greek word being the same he had used shortly before for "chief" ["of whom I am chief"]. The sense in each case is *pre-eminent*. Paul says—as a sinner I was *pre-eminent*, towering above all others; and in me *pre-emi-*

nently—as a most signal example—Jesus Christ showed forth his supreme, unutterable long-suffering, for a model—an illustration—of his mercy to all who might seek mercy ever after.

What could be more fitting here than this outgushing doxology!——The word "wise" [the only *wise* God] is by the full consent of all critics, removed from the text as without authority. It is objectionable because open to the supposition of another God not wise, this being the only God who is wise yet not absolutely the only God. The latter was Paul's meaning.——This King eternal, the *only God.*

18. This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;

19. Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck:

20. Of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

From Paul's words about his own call to the ministry, he passes naturally to the circumstances of Timothy's call.

"Charge," substantially in the modern sense—a charge to a pastor upon his installation; a special commission to a definite service. Timothy was put into the ministry and at this time intrusted with this special commission in accordance with antecedent prophetic intimations the particulars of which are not given. ——Paul compares his work to a military service, in the points (we may suppose) of being onerous, exacting, incessant, and under a higher authority. A "good warfare" in his ministry required him to hold firmly upon faith and retain evermore a good conscience—well-informed, true to the right and to God. Men who repel the decisions of a good conscience, regardless of its behests will surely make shipwreck of their faith. Paul had seen this, and proceeds to name two well-known examples. We may see similar examples by scores in every age. Tracing back the moral history of those men who make shipwreck of their faith, you will very commonly find the cause in a loose, perverted conscience. Gospel truth first became unpalatable and uncomfortable by reason of their violation of conscience—from which point the grade is always downward into fatal errors in doctrine, to the stranding of all true faith.——Of these men—Hymeneus and Alexander—it avails little at this late day to look after their personal history. Their moral history is put here briefly but unmistakably.

"Delivered over unto Satan" includes excommunication primarily and certainly—casting out from the communion of the church into the kingdom of the devil; possibly also their doom to some physical infliction, as in the case of Elymas the sorcerer (Acts 13: 10). This power of infliction seems to have been lodged in the apostles—a function analogous, though in result the very opposite, to the gift of healing. (See 2 Cor. 13: 2, 10 and 1 Cor. 4: 19-21.)

CHAPTER II.

Paul exhorts to prayer for all men, and for rulers especially, and why (v. 1–4); refers to the truths vital to be known for men's salvation (v. 5, 6); and again to his apostleship (v. 7) and to prayer (v. 8); to the adornment of women (v. 9, 10); that they should learn in silence and not teach or assume authority over man (v. 11, 12); assigning reasons, drawn from her posteriority in creation, and her priority in the fall (v. 13, 14). Her ultimate salvation is through the promised Redeemer (v. 15).

1. I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks, be made for all men;

2. For kings, and *for* all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

Having given Timothy his "charge" in very general terms, he proceeds here to particulars; and first enjoins prayer—prayer in all its various forms and for all men, especially for rulers.——Of these three several terms for prayer, the first suggests want and weakness; the second is the general term for prayer to God; and the third makes prominent the idea of *approach*—drawing nigh to God.——A special reason for prayer in behalf of rulers is that, through God's controlling hand, they may rule for the good of their subjects, but especially may rule so that "*we*"—the children of God—may live unmolested—exempt from civil persecution, permitted to lead a peaceful life.——"In all honesty"—but this not in the limited sense of integrity in business transactions, but in the broader sense—appropriate, dignified deportment.

3. For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior;

4. Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

"For *this*"—the word *this* looking back to v. 1—prayer for all men, including kings of course, but not making their case special. —"This is good" in itself and well-pleasing before and unto God our Savior, *i. e.*, to God as a Savior—one who in this capacity seeks the salvation of all men. Paul does not mean to limit "good" to the sight of God, but to say, good for every reason, always, everywhere.

Verse 4 declares explicitly that God wills to have all men saved. The verb he uses is not a mere future tense of the verb *to save*, but is a distinct verb * having the sense of desiring; willing in the sense of an act of will; being pleased to do. There is no oc-

* θελω.

casion to press this verb to the sense of an absolute decree or purpose made and executed irrespective of human agency—other verbs and never this being used for a purpose or decree which God forms and must execute. But it may, and indeed must, involve the real desire of his heart to save all men, and his will to have all appropriate means used to secure this result. Observe, this is said here as a reason why God's people should pray for all men—this being one of the means for their salvation. This willing that all men be saved doubtless includes the full provision on God's part of atonement for all men, and the freest and most urgent entreaties to all men to come to Christ for salvation. It implies most fully that never a man who comes penitently and in all sincerity shall be repelled away.

Moreover, let it be carefully noted that as a necessary means for this salvation God wills that all men should come to the full knowledge of the truth. It were utterly vain and irrational to suppose that men are to be saved by the mere *willing* of God to save them, and without their coming by their own personal activity to the knowledge of the truth. Their own voluntary agencies, by the very nature of the case, must be called into action, and in this particular line—viz., learning, believing, obeying the truth. All regeneration is by and through gospel truth known and believed. Thus Ellicott, comprehensively: "In a word, redemption is universal, yet conditional: all may be saved, yet all will not be saved, because all will not conform to God's appointed conditions."

5. For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

6. Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

7. Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle (I speak the truth in Christ, *and* lie not,) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.

8. I will therefore that men pray every-where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

Having said that men in order to be saved must come to the knowledge of the truth, it was for every reason appropriate to indicate *what truths* men must needs know, believe and act upon, as necessary means for their salvation. Here, therefore, they are: First, that there is *one God*—a primary truth as related to conversion and salvation; for, obviously, there can be no salvation without returning to God, and with equal certainty, he that cometh to God must believe *that he is*—that there *is* a God, yea one God and one only.

And next, one Mediator of God and man—a mediator being one who stands between, and who is between in order to mediate—to reconcile, to bring into harmony—which implies confidence and love on man's part, and acceptance on the part of God. As this

is in itself a necessity for man's salvation, so it must be a necessary truth to be known, believed, and acted upon. Further Paul adds—not precisely "*the* man," but *a man*, Christ Jesus, by this omission of the article designing apparently to lay his emphasis, not upon the particular man but upon his *humanity itself, i. e.*, upon the fact that Jesus is a man, of our own nature, and therefore of tenderest sympathies and of perfect human experiences. ——What this "man" has done for us comes next in order—the next truth vital toward human salvation. He "gave himself a ransom for all." The underlying figure here is *redemption by purchase—e. g.*, redeeming a slave or a war-captive by payment of some valuable consideration.——Compared with Matt. 20: 28 which has "lutron" [ransom], this has "anti-lutron" [a compensating ransom]—making the idea of *substitution*—one thing given for another thing received—yet more emphatic. The passages to be specially examined as illustrating this subject are Rom. 3: 24–26 and 5: 6–10 and Eph. 5: 2 and 1 Pet. 2: 24 and much of Hebrews, chapters 7 and 9 and 10. The reader may be referred to my Essay on the Atonement in the volume on the "Epistle to the Hebrews."

"To be testified in due time" looks to the fact that the full development of this atonement by Jesus Christ was reserved for "the fullness of time" when He should be manifested on the cross and the true import of this death should be taught by himself and by his apostles. For the purpose of developing this glorious truth (v. 7) I was ordained to the gospel ministry.—— Therefore, in view of these great facts and of their vital significance toward the salvation of sinners, let prayer be made by all men every-where, lifting up hands, not foul with sin and thus made loathsome and most repulsive to God; but hands pure from sin and hearts imbued with love (not hate); with confidence, not with doubt.

9. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shame-facedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

10. But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

In like manner I will (continuing this verb from v. 8)—I will that women adorn their persons, not obtrusively; not ostentatiously; above all, not immodestly—for impure purposes and results. The following negatives—(things *not* to be worn) should be diligently considered, at least by Christian women:—"gold, pearls, costly array;"—for is it thus that women can adorn the gospel—can honor their Redeemer—can put forward the redemption of a world from its sin and ruin? Rather let their adorning be such as becomes women professing godliness—viz., that of good works.

11. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.

12. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

13. For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

14. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

These verses treat of the proper sphere of woman in two distinct relations to society, viz. (1.) That of teacher or learner in Christian assemblies: (2.) That of authority or subjection as related to her husband.——On each point, Paul's doctrine seems to be very plainly expressed—that (1) they should be learners and not teachers; (2) should be in subjection, and not in authority.

Looking closely to the precise sense of certain phrases, we must explain "all subjection" to mean—not extreme, intense subjection, but rather, subjection in all things, in all the various relations:—*i. e.*, the "*all*" is not intensive but extensive. The sense of "usurp" is not really involved in the word Paul used, for this means simply, to *exercise* authority. But since this exercise is forbidden universally, it may be supposed that any exercise of authority is usurpation. In both v. 11 and 12, the word woman appears without the Greek article: "Let woman learn in silence;" "I suffer not woman to teach." The intention seems to be to speak of woman as a sex—the doctrine applying therefore to all women. Why does Paul put forward this view as specially his own, saying—"I suffer not?" Apparently he does not make the word "I" emphatic, to distinguish his own teaching on this point from that of other apostles; for, if so, he would have written the Greek personal pronoun "ego"—which he has not. Noticeably the parallel passage (1 Cor. 14: 34) has the passive voice—"it is not permitted"—a statement which lays no stress upon his own personal opinion.

The special occasion for introducing this subject in this letter to Timothy, if known, would probably answer our question. But not being known, we have no data for a decisive answer.

Paul's doctrine in regard to woman's public teaching and her subjection also, he proceeds (v. 13, 14) to maintain by two historic facts, viz., her posteriority of creation; and her priority in the sin which constituted the fall. Adam was created first; Eve second. Eve sinned first, being really the only one deceived. Of Adam's sin he says only—it did not lie in being deceived, *i. e.*, by Satan. In fact, Adam's temptation came in the social line—sympathy and example. It may be noticed that in v. 14, the word used for "deceived" is specially strong—being *exceedingly* deceived.

From these arguments it appears that the grounds of Paul's doctrine lie back in Eden and belong to the history of man as a race—a fact which seems to bear against attaching any considerable weight to the special degradation of the sex which no doubt was prominent in both Ephesus and Corinth. Ephesus had been cursed for ages by the debasing power of Diana-worship upon

the female sex; and Corinth was scarcely less notorious for the debasement of woman. We must assume that the women of those cities were very low in the scale of social culture and adaptation to the work of giving Christian instruction. Yet Paul does not base his doctrine upon this fact.

15. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in child-bearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

This verse should receive close attention.

There is no apparent reason for any other than the usual sense for the word "saved"—*i. e.*, saved unto everlasting life—not in the sense—borne through a dangerous crisis in the mother's life. For the latter sense some other word would have been used.——Moreover this condition of their being saved—"*if* they persevere in their Christian life"—is good for the usual sense of "saved;" but is not true and therefore not admissible in reference to the perilous crisis referred to.

Yet again, Paul did not say "*in* child-bearing," but because of—by means of.*——And further, the noun rendered "child-bearing" has the article, and therefore refers not to all births of children but to one birth in particular—*the* one which would readily occur to the reader of Gen. 3, from which the apostle is drawing his facts—viz., the birth of *that* seed of the woman who "should bruise the serpent's head."——Thus we have this admirable meaning:—But [notwithstanding her very great sin in the fall] she shall be saved [with the salvation of the gospel] by means of that wonderful human birth [the child Jesus] the promised "seed of the woman." This promise shall be good, not to all women, but to all who continue in faith, love and holiness. ——The reader will notice that this construction of the passage not only answers in every respect to the legitimate meaning of every word, but pre-eminently to the logical exigencies of the passage as related to the great sin of the woman in the fall, and to the naturally suggestive circumstance that this great first promise lies in Moses between the curse upon the serpent and the curse upon the woman, being the closing sentence of the former.

* *δια* not *εν*.

CHAPTER III.

Qualifications of bishops (v. 1–7); of deacons (v. 8–10); of deaconesses (v. 11); case of deacons resumed (v. 12, 13); reasons for giving these instructions (v. 14, 15); the great mystery of godliness (v. 16).

1. This *is* a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

The term "bishop" is here in the parochial, not the diocesan, sense: a pastor of one church; not a presiding officer over many, occupying a large district. If at this stage in church development there were any diocesan bishops, Timothy would be the man; not these "bishops" as to whom he now receives these instructions.——If any man has strong and tender aspirations for this office, let him be assured that the work is a good and noble one. He could desire none better or more worthy of his supreme devotion.

2. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

3. Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

A man above reproach, irreprehensible, against whom no charge of immorality can lie. Not a polygamist, having two or more wives. Christianity takes strong ground against polyamy as the natural foe to the divinely ordained family and its household.——Does Paul insist that the bishop must be a husband and not a celibate? He seems to assume that he will be. Yet as his words were apparently intended to bear simply against having two or more wives, it can not be assumed that he would exclude a man because unmarried, and certainly not if (as is reasonably certain) Paul was a celibate himself.——Ellicott argues earnestly that Paul goes against any second marriage, even after the death of a first wife, and appeals to 5: 9 below in support of this opinion. His arguments do not seem to me conclusive in proof of his position.

The Greek word for "vigilant" means self-controlled, self-poised, holding one's powers in perfect self-possession, as opposed to the inebriate. "Sober" is strictly of sound, well-balanced mind. "Of good behavior" suggests polished or at least unexceptionable manners. Naturally hospitable—this virtue holding a high place in Oriental society. Having the gift of teaching readily and well. "Not a man of wine," given to indulgence—the word suggesting that such proclivities carry with them more or less of violent demonstration, disorderly bearing. "Not propense to re-

taliation," striking back; but of gentle, forbearing spirit. "Not greedy of filthy lucre"—our version has it—words which suggest that Paul is not careful to speak in soft terms of this passion; would not recommend it to our respect—this passion being in his view rather disgusting than comely. Tischendorf however rejects this clause from the text here, but admits it in v. 8 below and in Titus 1: 7.——The word for "covetous" has essentially the same meaning. He must not be a money-lover. The word for "brawler" means a *fighter*. The bishop must have no propensity to quarrel.

4. One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

5. (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

6. Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

"In v. 4 "all gravity" describes the obedience of the children rather than the quality of the governing power. His family government should induce cheerful obedience.——Excellent logic is this in v. 5, comparing his private house with the house of God. If the former is a great care, the latter is greater; if one fails in the former, much more will he in the latter. "Not a novice"—strictly one recently planted; young in the religious life; without experience and without acquired strength. His danger would lie in the line of pride, being puffed up with his sudden elevation in society. The word is thought to imply a beclouded, stupid mind, which indeed self-conceit naturally produces.——"The condemnation of the devil"—not that which he adjudges, but that which was adjudged by God against him. That his damning sin was pride has been the current belief—supposably the effect (through his abuse) of distinction, exaltation, above his virtue to bear. Take care that your bishops be not exposed to this temptation beyond their endurance.

7. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

A fair reputation outside the church will be quite essential; for a bad one will aggravate his temptations exceedingly and be to him "the snare of the devil." The men made prominent in and over the church should be such as naturally command public confidence. While this is vital to the moral power of the church over the community, it is scarcely less so to the comfort and success of the church officers themselves.

8. Likewise *must* the deacons *be* grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

9. Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

10. And let these also first be proved: then let them use the office of a deacon, being *found* blameless.

Deacons—the second grade of church officers (Phil. 1: 1)—must have these qualifications.——"Grave"—not frivolous and foolish. Whose words are honest and truthful; not double-worded (Greek), saying one thing to this man and another thing to that, from sinister motives.——"Not greedy of filthy lucre" is held to be genuine here, having a precautionary bearing against defalcation in the custodians of the church treasury. This was their original function (Acts 6). In process of time, other responsibilities were laid upon them, of discipline and of instruction, subordinate and helpful to the pastor. Some critics suppose deacons referred to Rom. 12: 7 and 1 Cor. 12: 28—in the former under the word "diaconate;" in the latter, "helps."——"Holding the mystery of the faith"—the great doctrine of the gospel, long unrevealed, but brought to light in the gospel age—holding it with honest heart, a conscience not abused but sound; a conscientious believer. "Be proved," not by any formal trial or even investigation, but by the silent testimony of a blameless life.

11. Even so *must their* wives *be* grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

Here the question of exposition is whether the verse refers to deacons' wives or to deaconesses—*i. e.*, an official order of female workers, designated by the church and doing church work.

In favor of the latter and against the former construction, lie these considerations:

1. The word Paul used means "women" as well as wives. Let women likewise (*i. e.*, women holding an office of the same sort as the deacons).

2. Paul could not say in Greek "*deaconesses*" (the feminine of deacon), because this word has in Greek no distinctive feminine form. In Rom. 16: 1 Phebe is called a "deacon" (masculine form) "of the church in Cenchrea." If we did not know that she was a sister, we should assume that Paul meant a deacon in the masculine sense. Consequently Paul in our passage had no better word at command for deaconess than the one he used, "women"—*i. e.*, women holding an office similar to the deacons just before spoken of.

3. Paul did not say "*their*" wives. He put here no word for *their*.

4. It would be rash to assume that all deacons' wives would be fit for such church responsibilities, and therefore the construction which interprets the passage of all deacons' wives is violently improbable.

5. No corresponding requirements are made upon pastors' wives; much less then should they be made upon wives of deacons as such.

6. If these were deacons' wives, some place should have been

given to their domestic duties and to their qualifications for such duties. Paul was not the man to overlook the Christian home, especially of the deacon.

I conclude therefore that this verse (as Paul wrote it) defines the qualifications of that very useful order of church laborers—the female deaconesses. Comparing v. 11 with v. 8, we shall see that their qualifications are essentially the same with those of the masculine diaconate.—"Not slanderers" is here additional to what we have there, perhaps with reason.

On the other hand, "not greedy of filthy lucre" is not here—for reasons equally obvious, the church funds not being in their hand, and perhaps less love of money in their heart.

12. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

13. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Polygamy is wisely made a disqualification for the deacon, it being naturally fatal to the peace if not to the purity of the family.——"A good degree," in the sense of standing, status, not here, before the public on earth, but before God, this being of immeasurably more importance, and affiliating naturally with their "great boldness in the faith of Christ." (See also 1 Tim. 6: 9.) To have served well as a deacon is to have done a noble work for the church and for God—a work which can by no means lose its reward.

14. These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly:

15. But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

What Paul said was "hoping to come to thee," not "soon," but *sooner—i. e.*, supposably, sooner than had been talked of, or than the tenor of these instructions might suggest. But as this was a doubtful contingency, he would carefully instruct him how to bear himself in his supervision and care of the house of God, the church. This use of the word "house" looks back to the ancient temple, called often "the house."

This is declared to be "the pillar and ground of the truth"—words whose meaning can not well be mistaken. The church is the custodian and guardian of God's revealed truth, her function being not only to preach and teach it, but to preserve it pure, to defend it against perversion.

16. And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit,

seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

"Confessedly great is the mystery of godliness"—*i. e.*, the mystery which enshrouds the great central truth of the gospel scheme:—said with reference to the incarnation, God made manifest in human flesh.

The next word in our version, "God," has elicited immense discussion with great diversity of views *on the point of its textual authority*. The more recently discovered manuscripts have brought new light, and as a consequence of more exhaustive investigation, it is now almost universally agreed to reject Theos [God] as not well sustained, and to accept instead the Greek relative pronoun masculine (ὅς) in the sense *who*, its antecedent being really the person implied in the word "mystery"—that wonderful Personage, the Logos of John, whose nature and relations involve the utmost mystery, but who yet is known to mortals by the descriptive facts here affirmed of him. First, "made manifest in the flesh;" next, "justified" [sustained] in his claim to be the eternal Son of God by his manifestations of spirit—*i. e.*, in and through his higher spiritual nature; next, "seen of angels," apparently in the sense of being revealed to their astonished gaze as never before, and we may suppose as he never could have been save through this incarnation; then preached among Gentiles; believed on in the world; and finally received into glory at his ascension.

This remarkable series of clauses, so entirely similar in construction; six passive verbs all in the same mood and the same tense, followed each by its noun in the same case and with a single exception, preceded by the same preposition, strongly suggest that the whole verse is transferred from some Christian hymn, prepared for a doxology in honor of the Christian's Savior. This theory would well account for the apparent abruptness of the relative pronoun which heads the sentence with no distinctly developed antecedent.——This grouping of similar phrases respecting Jesus Christ was designed to present the great historic facts of his incarnation, earthly life, death, and final ascension.

CHAPTER IV.

On swerving from the faith into ascetic practices (v. 1–3); ascetic abstinence from meats unreasonable (v. 4, 5); how Timothy should bear himself in this regard (v. 6–8); enforced by the example of apostles (v. 9, 10); Timothy exhorted to a blameless and studious life (v. 11–13); to cultivate his spiritual gifts with much meditation and great diligence that so he may save both himself and his hearers (v. 14–16).

1. Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

2. Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

3. Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

Obviously these "latter times" were not supposed to be very remote even then, for Paul considers the development of heretical opinions then apparent as at least an incipient fulfillment of those predictions. These express predictions may have been made to Paul himself; and also in substance to other apostles. See 2 Pet. 2: 1 and 1 John 2: 18 and 4: 1–3. This apostasy from the faith comes from giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines—not concerning devils, but taught by devils—a clear reference to Satanic agency.——In v. 2, it is the seduced—not the Satanic seducer—who work in the hypocrisy of lying speakers [the literal construction]—men of cauterized conscience—its normal action being deadened and practically ruled out by the self-hardening effect of doctrinal delusion and of the sin-loving spirit. A healthy and rightly sensitive conscience has great conservative power against erratic beliefs and a damaging asceticism. The revolting delusions referred to here were possible only because their advocates had lost the corrective and preserving agency of a sound and vigorous conscience.

Other points of delusion were—prohibition of marriage; and requiring abstinence from certain articles of food.——"Meats"—not necessarily flesh, but food generally.——That this prohibition was gratuitous, uncalled for, and bad if not even morally wrong, is shown in the fact that God created this food for those who believe and know the truth—to be received indeed with thanksgiving. Paul would not deny that men not believers and not knowing the truth might also use this food, God having provided it for them as well, that so his goodness might lead them to repentance and thanksgiving. But his present argument required him to speak of Christian men inasmuch as these teachers of delusion maintained that the highest piety required celibacy and abstinence from certain food. These mischievous doctrines Paul refutes.

Historically, these ascetic notions appeared early as an offshoot from Judaism, in sects known as the Essenes and the Therapeutæ. At a somewhat later period, these notions degenerated into yet more serious aberration under the influence of Oriental philosophy and erratic fancy, to the result of what is known in early church history as Gnosticism.

4. For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

5. For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

Every thing created of God, *i. e.*, for the food of man, is in itself good, and by no means to be rejected as if it were a sin to eat it; yet should it be received with thanksgiving (especially at our meals). It becomes to us holy in the sense of not sinful to use it, since God's word (of permission) has put it at our service. Prayer befits us as children at our Father's table.

6. If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

To suggest these things to the brethren becomes the manifest duty of the faithful, well-instructed minister of Christ. Let not Timothy think of them as lying outside the pale of his responsibilities. It is fully assumed here that these ascetic doctrines—forbidding marriage and enjoining abstinence from certain food—are essentially pernicious. If we ask *how* and *why*, the answer is at hand:—They displace the true gospel and its real Savior, and bring in what is no gospel; they teach men to trust in what is worse than worthless, and so, they rule out all proper trust in Christ. Worst of all, this religion has a large place for human pride and no place for real prayer—no place for the gracious help of the Spirit of God.

7. But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself *rather* unto godliness.

8. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

"Profane"—not precisely irreverent, blasphemous toward God; but godless, pernicious; worse than frivolous and foolish. "Old wives'"—better, old women's. "Fables"—literally, *myths*, low superstitions, having no other origin than a diseased, perverted fancy. "Exercise" in this connection has no reference to physical labor or recreation—muscular practice for health—but merely to *asceticism*; abstinence from food; self-imposed subjugation of appetite, pushed sometimes to the extent of self-torture. Such "bodily exercise," Paul says, is of little worth. It should never be confounded with godliness or for a moment be compared with it in value. Godliness brings the promise of life—real blessedness, both here and hereafter.

9. This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation.

10. For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those that believe.

That godliness brings to man the highest good of both time and eternity is perfectly true and most reliable. In the faith it inspires we both labor and suffer reproach.

In the general sense God is the Savior of all men; viz., in the sense of having provided salvation for all and of suspending the execution of law upon the race so as to afford them a probationary life in which to secure salvation. Of those that believe, he is specially the Savior, in the high and perfect sense.

11. These things command and teach.

12. Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

Let thy gravity and personal dignity of bearing and character be such that no man can despise thee for thy youth.——"An example in conversation"—which as usual for this word in the Scriptures, is not speech, talk, but the whole tenor of life. And moreover, "charity," here as ever in Paul, is love.

13. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

14. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

15. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them: that thy profiting may appear to all.

16. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

"The gift" [charisma] one of those special gifts of the Spirit, common in the apostolic age; brought to view fully in Paul to the Corinthians (1 Eps. 12).——This had been conferred upon him as the result of prophetic pre-intimations as to his future work and in connection with his ordination by the presbytery, probably at the time he gave himself to the gospel ministry under Paul (Acts 16: 1–3).——This apostolic, fatherly counsel, to diligence in study, reading, meditation and to supreme devotion to his work, can not be too highly commended; can not be too faithfully followed by all the Timothys of every age.

CHAPTER V.

How to treat the elder brethren and the younger (v. 1); also the elder and the younger women, and the widows especially (v. 2–7); duty of providing for one's own (v. 8); who should be enrolled as widows (v. 9, 10). The case of the younger widows (v. 11–15); they should be cared for within their own family (v. 16). Of the honor due to faithful elders (v. 17, 18); of their discipline (v. 19, 20); solemn adjuration against prejudice and partiality (v. 21). On imposition of hands (v. 22); the medicinal use of wine (v. 23); and of estimating the sins or the good deeds of men (v. 25).

1. Rebuke not an elder, but entreat *him* as a father; *and* the younger men as brethren;

The word "rebuke" is strong, to the extent of severe reprimand. This would be in very bad taste for a young man like Timothy. Rather, treat him as a father, even when he is apparently culpable.

The question of interpretation here is whether this is an elder in office or in age only. In favor of its being the elder in age is the antithesis with the younger men;—but over against this is the use of the singular number. If Paul had meant all old men as such, why did he not use the plural, and so make the antithetic relation clear and complete?

2. The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

3. Honor widows that are widows indeed.

4. But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.

"With all purity," was very pertinent counsel for a young man.——"Widows indeed"—really left desolate, with no natural protector and provider.——"Nephews"—not the sons of a brother or a sister, but grandchildren, according to the old English, but now obsolete, sense of this word.——Let these children and grandchildren learn to fulfill the duties of piety in their own house [family], and requite their parents or grandparents, paying some of the mighty debt of parental care and support contracted during their own infancy and childhood. This is right before God.

5. Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.

6. But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.

7. And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless.

"The widow indeed" is "desolate" in the sense of having none who by natural ties befriend and provide for her. Such are thrown by the force of circumstances upon trust in God and upon unceasing prayer. Ye may know them as desolate and needing aid by those fruits of their bereavement.——Does Paul mean to say that no widow should receive church aid until she exhibits these fruits of her trial—this trust in God and this special prayerfulness?——The view given above seems to be the fair construction of his words. Assuming her real piety, you may expect to find these fruits of her bereavement, provided she have no human reliance but is thrown naked upon God.

"She that liveth in pleasure," riotously, wastefully; in sensuality and in the pleasure-loving spirit—is really dead already—has lost all spiritual life. She has no claim on the church for support.——"These things," requiring discrimination among applicants for church benevolence, ye must insist upon.

8. But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

If any Christian brother refuse to provide for his near relatives, and specially for those of his own family and household, he repudiates his Christian faith, disowns its obligations, and is worse than a heathen; for the better class of heathen fully recognize the obligation to care for their own households, and particularly for their parents and grandparents.——Of the Essenes, to whose opinions this epistle alludes more than once, it is said that they did not permit men to give relief to their near relatives without special leave from their overseers, though they might freely give aid to outsiders, supposed to be in need. This doctrine Paul would pointedly disown and repudiate.

9. Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man,

10. Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

On these verses, the great question strenuously debated by the critics, is, whether the class thus enrolled ["taken into the number"] is one of semi-official character—widows bearing church responsibilities, analogous to deaconesses; or on the contrary, is simply a class accepted by the church as worthy of her support by pecuniary aid.——The former supposition is largely defended by impugning the latter; on the grounds—that for a class to be simply supported, (*a*) The age is too high;—(*b*) That it would

be cruel to reject all of less age;—(*c*) That the qualifications are too high.——It is also urged that early church history recognizes a class of widows, holding semi-official relations and performing useful functions in behalf of the church. As to this argument, it should be asked—How early does this official class appear?

Against the theory of an official class and in favor of supposing this enrollment to be simply of recipients of church aid, it may be said—An official class should have been more clearly defined by some distinctive name or title; that we have had deaconesses before (chap. 3: 11) and can not look for another allusion to them here, nor does the church need, nor has she ever had a second class of official functionaries;—also that it would be quite unreasonable to exclude all under this specified age.—— On the whole, the evidence preponderates in favor of assuming that this enrollment refers to widows as recipients of aid, and not as holding church office.——"Having been the wife of but one man" and not of two in succession. This seems to be the fair construction of these words.——V. 10 gives the points of a fair record in the womanly and maternal qualities of a Christian mother. Lacking this record, the widow could not come upon the roll of beneficiary aid from the church. Such a rule would indirectly be an incentive to a useful, honorable Christian life.

11. But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry;
12. Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.
13. And withal they learn *to be* idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.
14. I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.
15. For some are already turned aside after Satan.

Why, as a general rule, widows under sixty should be rejected. They are not beyond the temptation to "wax wanton against Christ"—the sense of these words suggesting fullness of strength, an excess of animal spirits; also luxury, coupled with laxness of moral restraint, and little or no regard for the law of Christ. ——In the clause "They will marry," the reader must not take "will" to be merely the future tense. It is a verb of willing, choosing, perhaps here, passionately desiring. They are propense toward marriage.——"Having damnation," seems too strong, the sense being—bearing or exhibiting in their very demeanor this condemnation against themselves—that they have cast off their former faith. They show at a front view—on their very face—that they disown Christ, have renounced their Christian faith.——Some critics hold the meaning to be—have broken

their pledge not to marry—it being claimed that they gave this pledge when received upon the list of beneficiaries. But according to Paul these younger widows have not been put upon this list. Nor is there proof that so early as this, any vow of virginity, or vow not to marry, was exacted or even received. On the contrary, Paul gives it as his judgment that these widows should marry. The evils of taking widows still young upon the list of church beneficiaries were obvious and manifold. Let them rather resume the family relation again and discharge its responsibilities honorably. So doing they will be less likely to give occasion to any adverse men to reproach the gospel, and will less expose themselves to be ensnared by Satan.

16. If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.

Let Christian men or women, having widows in their own family circle, provide for them without burdening the church.

17. Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine.

18. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer *is* worthy of his reward.

The pith of this precept is—Esteem church officers highly in love for their works' sake, giving them honor, not so much for their office as for their service. Let such as do their work exceptionally well have double honor, especially those who both preach the word and teach sound doctrine. This word "*especially*" does not necessarily assume an order of teaching elders distinct from the ruling, for those who labored in word and doctrine so well may have done so unofficially, through love of the work and by virtue of special fitness for it. Officially, therefore, they may have stood on the common footing of all the elders.—— The word "honor" * is thought to carry in itself the sense of compensation. But if not lexically, it certainly does here by implication, for the next verse shows that Paul has compensation, real financial support in his mind. Toward this, his appeal to ancient scripture legitimately bears. "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox *while treading out* the grain;"—it would be inhuman, cruel—in the very sight of his food! See the passage (Deut. 25: 4) and Paul's argument from it (1 Cor. 9: 7–11).

19. Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

* τιμη.

20. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

No complaint against an elder should be entertained unless well substantiated by testimony. Special reasons for this precept will readily suggest themselves—so readily that Paul might excuse himself from referring to them—such as the mischief done to religion by groundless charges; and their special exposure to scandal and slander from those who are at heart hostile to Christianity.

21. I charge *thee* before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

"Elect angels"—the unfallen. This solemn adjuration refers apparently to all the instructions Paul has been giving in reference to the discipline of erring members, and perhaps, also, to the distribution of church alms to the poor. By all the momentous interests of the church of the living God—as in the presence of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, let Timothy guard his mind against prejudice and against partiality. Let him have no respect of persons; no favoritism.

22. Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.

Even sensible critics disagree as to the significance of this imposition of hands—many, probably most, referring it to the act of ordination to the ministry; but some to official remission of sins. Inasmuch as Paul is familiar with the laying on of hands in the former sense (see above, 4: 14), there seems no valid objection to this interpretation here. As to the remitting of sins by this act, the existence of such a usage at this early day is very questionable. I am aware of no authority for it in the New Testament.——What is said here may be applied to ordination. Unworthy candidates—men with real faults of character and of life—may apply. Take care that you know them thoroughly before you lay hands upon their heads. Make not thyself responsible for admitting such sins into the ministry lest you become virtually partaker in their guilt, and an occasion of great scandal to Christianity.

23. Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.

"Keep thyself pure"—Paul had said; but adds here—Do not understand me to speak in the ascetic sense, of the purity supposed to come of abstinence from either food or drink (after the doctrine of the Essenes).

On this point my advice is—Be not a water-drinker exclusively; but for your health's sake, use a little wine, under your manifold infirmities.——We are incompetent to judge of Paul's medical skill in this particular prescription; but it is legitimate to say that in his view it was no sin, under the circumstances of that age, to use wine in small quantities as a medicine.

24. Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some *men* they follow after.

25. Likewise also the good works *of some* are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise can not be hid.

These verses apparently follow v. 22 in thought, suggesting the fact that in judging of men as candidates for the ministry—some men's sins would be readily manifest, indicating at once what your judgment ought to be, so that you might know them beforehand and need not wait for time or temptation to reveal them; while in the case of other men, their sins come to light only afterwards. And so, in like manner of their good points and good works; some would show their better things at once; in the case of others, time would be necessary to reveal them.

CHAPTER VI.

Duties of Christian servants and especially to believing masters (v. 1, 2); as to those who teach otherwise (v. 3–5); that godliness with contentment is great gain, and why (v. 6–8); the passion for riches pernicious (v. 9, 10); the higher life of the man of God (v. 11, 12), a charge made specially solemn by its relation to the coming Savior and the glorious God (v. 13–16); how he should instruct and admonish the rich (v. 17–19); points to be specially avoided (20, 21).

1. Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and *his* doctrine be not blasphemed.

2. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise *them*, because they are brethren; but rather do *them* service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.

Paul's words do not imply (as our version might be supposed to do) that there may be some servants not under the yoke. What Paul said was this: Let all those who are under the yoke, being servants—*i. e.*, in this domestic and legal relation of servitude.

——Let them account their own masters, whether godly or ungodly, to be worthy of all due respect. The supposition is that these are Christian servants, and therefore come under Timothy's instruction as such. Respectful treatment of their masters would adorn the gospel. Let them not assume that their embracing Christianity and being welcomed into the church as real men, had lifted them above the obligations of due respect and reasonable service toward their masters.——Moreover, in the case of believing masters, let them not despise them because themselves have been brought upon a higher social footing by conversion and reception into the church as men and brethren. The rather should they render cheerful service because the partakers of the benefit are believers and beloved. Here the phrase—"the partakers of the benefit" is certainly the subject (nominative) of the verb. I understand this clause—"the partakers," etc., to assume that duties, relations, and beneficial results, under the then existing servitude, were reciprocal and mutual—the servant having some of the benefits and the master some. Now inasmuch as the master, standing in this reciprocal relation and having good to receive as well as to confer, had become a Christian believer and a beloved brother, therefore, the more let the Christian servant render his service cheerfully.

3. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

4. He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,

5. Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

The close connection with the preceding context seems to show that this "teaching otherwise" must refer to the duties of Christian servants; but what the particular type of this "other teaching" was, is not very clearly brought out. The last clause of v. 5 assumes that those teachers of other doctrine thought to make godliness a source of gain.——"Wholesome words" are further described as coming to us from the Lord himself and the doctrine in harmony with true godliness.——"Is proud"—really obfuscated, of foggy brain (perhaps thought of as the fruit of pride); —"knowing nothing well."——"Doting," in the sense of a morbid passion, not wholesome and healthy, but rather the fruit of a mind diseased.——Over disputed questions and logomachies—in which the controversy is upon words, not things;—word-battles. ——"Disputings"—not precisely "perverse," but, according to the corrected text, persistent, inveterate, never-ending.——"Men of corrupt mind";—better, of corrupt *heart*, for the corruption is of moral, not merely intellectual character.——Thinking godliness

to be gain—*i. e.*, a thing out of which to make money. The translation—"gain is godliness"—reverses the grammatical order; for godliness, having the article, is certainly the subject (nominative) of the verb. The true sense is both illustrated and confirmed by Tit. 1 : 11—"Teaching things they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake"—which means—trying to make money out of their religious teaching.——The clause—"from such, withdraw thyself"—is omitted by the best textual authorities. The thought is sufficiently implied without being expressed.

6. But godliness with contentment is great gain.

7. For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out.

8. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.

The sentiment—Godliness is gain—in the sense of those who teach otherwise (v. 3) is abominable; but in the Christian sense—adding to godliness contentment, it is great gain—among the richest and grandest acquisitions possible to mortals here below. Of course, the contentment looks toward the life that now is; not that which is to come; and assumes that the Christian's supply of this world's good may be very limited—so limited that there will be ample room often for the grace of contentment with little. But he has no need to lay up worldly good for a future life, since he must go out of this world as naked as he came—a sentiment ancient as Job (1 : 21). Food and raiment are, to all, the staples for real and necessary use; having these, let the Christian rest from anxious care in the repose of content.

9. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

"*Will* be rich" with strong emphasis upon "will" which translates not a future tense, but an intensive verb to express an earnest passion—a strong and persistent *will*—to get rich.——In the phrase—"The love of money is the root of all evil," the Greek word for "root" has not the article expressed, and therefore leaves the question whether it should be supplied, somewhat in doubt. Without the article Paul would say only—is *a* root of all sorts of evil, but would not affirm it to be strictly *the* root of all existing evils.——Moreover, it deserves attention that the Greek word for "*all* evil" may very probably mean, not the sum total of all possible evils, but—taken extensively rather than intensively—all sorts of evil; evils of every class.

"Coveting after" the love of money is deficient in precision. We obviate the difficulty, either by assuming that the "coveting after"

—[reaching forth eagerly to attain] is said of the money rather than of the love of it, or by taking the word for "coveting" in the sense of giving indulgence to the passion—to the love itself—of money acquisition.——So doing, men err from the faith—are seduced away from their piety and their God.——"Many sorrows"—not least among which are the pangs of a torturing conscience over the folly of making a wreck of man's nobler powers—very commonly, the wreck of principle and of morals.

11. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

12. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

The address—"O thou man of God"—is at once pertinent and strong. How could "a man of God" allow himself to be ensnared into such lusts and such a wreck of ruin! O how much nobler is the life set before him as a man of God! What graces of character, jewels far above gold; treasures that will not be left behind when men pass from this world to the next! What objects to be attained—sublime beyond conception—"eternal life," in the sense of unutterable, ever-enduring blessedness! Let him lay hold of it; realize that God calls him to it, and that he has pledged himself to supreme devotion to this high pursuit—this really glorious attainment!

Note the logic that puts such acquisitions over against the love and the labor for money with its perils and its curses—its bitter pangs and its making of human life a real and a terrible failure!

13. I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and *before* Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;

14. That thou keep *this* commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:

15. Which in his times he shall show, *who is* the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

16. Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom *be* honor and power everlasting. Amen.

This charge, already exceedingly solemn, is still heightened and its solemnity made almost awfully impressive, by bringing the whole scene—himself and his dear son Timothy—into that most august Presence of the Infinite and Ever-blessed God—whose perfections are here brought to view and not least his relations to his glorious Son, our Savior and our Final Judge. "God who *quickeneth* all things" should be—who *upholdeth* all things

in the being he has given them. The usage of the verb * is entirely decisive in favor of the sense—*uphold in life*—rather than—*give life*. The cases of its usage in the New Testament are—"Whosoever will lose his life shall *preserve* it" (Luke 17: 33); "cast out their infants so that they might not *live*"—(have their life preserved) (Acts 7: 19). Old Testament cases (Septuagint) may be seen in Exodus 1: 17 and Judges 8: 19. The thought of God as the universal Preserver of all, whose all-sustaining arm Timothy had need of under his vast responsibilities, is specially pertinent here.——"That thou keep this commandment, stainless, above possible reproach"—*i. e.*, in perfect obedience.——"Until the appearing of our Lord"—*as if* thy work were to hold on until that august appearing—all the days working on with that coming in thine eye as near at hand. It can not be disputed that Paul and his fellow-apostles accustomed themselves to think of that stupendous coming as *in some sense* very near.

But it is equally beyond dispute that a sense of nearness may make no special account of calendar *time*. The "great day of the Lord" as seen by Old Testament prophets—when they spake of the fall of Babylon or of similar events—was always "near at hand," though as in Isaiah (13: 6) of the fall of Babylon, the event was three centuries in calendar distance. (See also Joel 2: 1 and 3: 14 and Obadiah 15.)

Events of absorbing interest and overwhelming magnitude are brought near to human thought and sense by their very vastness and by the thrilling interest they inspire. Under this law of mind, a guilty and convicted sinner comes to feel that hell is sensibly near—so near that he would not be surprised if it should open suddenly beneath his feet! On the same principle, heaven and its exalted King may seem consciously very near to one whose heart is there. Under this law of mind the apostles seem to have spoken of Christ's coming as near—yet remarkably ignoring all measurements and conceptions of calendar time. For when Paul comes to face the definite idea of *time*, in reference to Christ's coming, he sees a great apostasy between that coming and the present hour (2 Thess. 2: 1–12), and also (Rom. 11: 25–27) the conversion not of the Jews only but "the fullness of the Gentiles." These events made large demands for intervening *time* before the end could come. Yet this real knowledge of intervening time did not rule out from the mind a practical sense of Christ's coming as near.

The "appearing" here (Greek Epiphany) is unquestionably Christ's second advent. (See the usage of this word in notes on 2 Thess. 2: 8.) Ellicott refers to De Wette and others as finding in this passage positive proof that Paul believed the advent near in time; but for himself remarks—"It may perhaps be admitted that the sacred writers have used language in reference to their Lord's return which seems to show that the longings of hope had

* ζωογονέω.

almost become the convictions of belief; yet it must also be observed that (as in the present case) this language is often qualified by expressions which show that they felt and knew that that hour was not to be looked for immediately (2 Thess. 2: 2), but that the counsels of God and the machinations of Satan must require time for their "development."

This appearing in its proper time *He* shall cause to be seen—making it sublimely manifest before the universe—even *He* who is the Blessed and only Potentate—the supreme source of all power and dominion:—who only hath immortal being and is the Fountain of being to all else that exists. That He dwells in light unapproachable, evermore invisible in person to created eyes, is the doctrine of the Old Testament as also of the New. (Ex. 33: 20; Deut. 4: 12; John 1: 18 and 1 John 4: 12.) As to the invisibility of God, the scriptural doctrine seems to be—not that all manifestation of his personal being is shut off by interposed authority as that it is naturally impossible; that our senses have no powers adapted to take cognizance of the essential being of God.

17. Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

18. That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

19. Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

From being caught up and borne away by most sublime conceptions of the ever glorious God, Paul now returns to finish his charge to Timothy in respect to the rich;—against pride—to which wealth exposes the heart of man; against trust in the uncertainty of riches—as if there were nothing better than dim uncertainty there. Rather let them trust in God (the better text omits "living"), but adds—who gives us every thing richly to enjoy. Hence let the rich remember their Divine Benefactor and their own resulting obligation to do good with their wealth, and to be rich—not in hoarded gold, but in good works and in the reacting blessedness thereof. So may they provide themselves a good foundation and firm standing from which they may lay hold upon eternal life: for apart from such footing, how hardly shall the rich man enter that kingdom!

In the last clause of v. 19 the corrected text has, not "eternal," but *real* life.

20. O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane *and* vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

21. Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace *be* with thee. Amen.

This clause is purposely comprehensive of the great points of this epistle. The allusion to things to be shunned leads us back to chap. 1: 3-7.——Those new and dangerous doctrines had already ensnared some; let him use every endeavor to arrest this delusion, that no more be seduced to their ruin.

SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

INTRODUCTION.

Internal evidence makes it clear that this epistle was written by Paul from his prison-cell at Rome (1: 16) where Onesiphorus found him; "oft refreshed him, and was not ashamed of his chain." It was after his first hearing before the court, which seems to have been in part successful. He says of it—"The Lord stood with me and strengthened me, that by me the preaching might be fully known; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." But at the point of this writing it would seem that the final and fatal decision had been reached, for he said—"I am ready to be offered"—literally, I am already being poured out, *i. e.*, as a libation in the well-known drink-offering; "and my departure is at hand" (4: 6). Yet he did not anticipate the execution immediately, for he begs Timothy to come to him shortly and before winter (4: 9, 21). The testimony of the early church fathers places the date of his martyrdom in the spring of A. D. 68. That Timothy was then still at Ephesus is on the whole probable.

As to the special occasion and object of this epistle, it does not appear that any new issue had been sprung upon Timothy at Ephesus, or that Paul had heard any thing from him which called for definite reply. The same nascent heresies still gave Paul anxiety, and occasioned several special exhortations—which however are not essentially unlike what he had said in his first letter.

In the absence of other data, judging from the epistle itself, we may assume that the occasion for this letter was largely *subjective* to Paul himself—existing in his own circumstances and consequent state of mind. His affectionate heart was smarting under the apostasy of some whom he had loved—Demas (4: 10); apparently, Phygellus and

Hermogenes, and all those in Asia, we know not how many (1: 15); Tychicus he had sent to Ephesus (4: 12); Trophimus he had left at Miletum sick (4: 20); and in fact, only Luke remained with him (4: 11). So solitary, so nearly alone in these trying days, it was one source of comfort that he could call to mind the unfeigned faith of Timothy and of his ancestry. Yet not altogether satisfied with mere reminiscences, he greatly longed to see him. It was the cry of his heart's love. Though the remembrance of Timothy's tears filled him with joy, yet Paul was human. It was on his human side that this felt want of Timothy's presence sprung up and became so strong. It was not that his heart, Godward, was sad or despondent, or lacked the rich and sweet consolations of the gospel. In all his copious correspondence we nowhere see his soul tower up into more sublime assurance, or repose in sweeter confidence and more placid trust. But all this did not supersede his human sympathies. Apparently it did not sensibly lessen the deep longings of his heart to see Timothy face to face and communicate with him as a kindred spirit in these last scenes of his earthly pilgrimage.

Did he also feel—perhaps he did—that it would be a joy to pour out upon the sympathetic soul of this dear disciple and fellow-laborer his own glorious anticipations of heavenly rest and talk with him face to face of the good fight he had fought, of the race-course he had run and so nearly finished, and of the crown of righteousness laid up for him in the world beyond?

However this may be, it was more than pardonable in Paul to have some last and earnest longings to breathe forth his great heart once more upon the sympathetic heart of this beloved son, not merely for sympathy's sake, but in the unconscious feeling that he might thus bequeath more of himself—more of his own sublime faith and holy zeal for Christ —into the receptive soul of his son in the faith.

Moreover, it may be suggested that, in the uncertainty of all human and earthly events, Paul could not be very sure of seeing Timothy again, and therefore might realize more deeply the importance of transferring as best he might, to paper these deep thoughts and impassioned longings and outflowing sympathies, coupled with counsels and exhortations, as his last legacy to his best earthly friend!

Well, whether we have fathomed truly and adequately

the heart reasons for this letter to Timothy, we may afford a tribute of grateful thanks to God that his Spirit moved Paul to write this precious epistle and his good providence took all the care needful to preserve it for all these future ages.

SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

CHAPTER I.

A brief introduction (v. 1, 2); thanks to God for such precious reminiscences of Timothy's faith, whom he longs to see (v. 3–5); reminds him to stir up his ministerial gifts (v. 6, 7); to be bold in the face of persecution for the gospel's sake (v. 8), in view of what this gospel is and is doing (v. 9–11); for which Paul has suffered, yet with glorious consolations (v. 12); exhorts to hold fast the gospel doctrine and his spiritual gifts (v. 13, 14); apostasy of those in Asia (v. 15); over against which stands the tender sympathy and refreshing aid of Onesiphorus, for whom he prays (v. 16–18).

1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

2. To Timothy, *my* dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

The nice point of interpretation in v. 1 is the sense of the preposition translated "according to" * before "promise of life."—"According to" does not express the sense well. It looks toward Paul's apostleship, giving its object and purpose, and saying that he was made an apostle *with reference to* that promise of life which came to men through Christ Jesus. For the interests and purposes of this "promise"—to preach the gospel of this glorious promise—he was made an apostle.

3. I thank God, whom I serve from *my* forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;

4. Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;

5. When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

"Serve with my forefathers," for his Pharisaic ancestors were, we may suppose, very conscientious in their way, under the light

*κατα.

of Judaism. But the qualifying words, "with a pure conscience," may quietly suggest that his Christian conscience was more pure than theirs, adjusted to a purer light and to a higher sense of what moral purity is.—"That without ceasing I remember thee," etc.—a translation which assumes that this unceasing remembrance is the very thing for which he thanks God. This is neither pertinent as to its sense nor well sustained by the usage of the Greek particle translated "that." * Better thus: "I thank God, as [inasmuch as] without ceasing I make mention of thee in my prayers, having remembrance of thy unfeigned faith," etc. (v. 5); the blessing for which he thanks God being this, that in his daily prayer for Timothy, he is reminded afresh of his pure, unhypocritical faith. It is indeed a blessing to be thankful for that every remembrance of this dear son brings up his faith. Paul makes a long sentence, as is his wont, by interweaving collateral points suggested in rapid succession; but the ultimate thought I take to be as here explained.——That Paul should long exceedingly to see a dear son in the faith, whose sympathetic soul was so fully in unison with his own, the remembrance of whose tears always filled his soul with joy, is by no means surprising, especially considering his own painful solitude in his prison cell under the absence of so many of his dearest friends. That this precious faith dwelt first in time in his grandmother and next in his mother, and then in the son, is beautifully suggestive: (1.) That faith so naturally descends as a legacy—an inheritance—from parent to child, easily transmissible under the laws of our social nature; and, (2.) That this inheritance runs more often in the maternal line than in the paternal—through mothers more than through fathers—a fact due perhaps to the closer relationship that exists between mother and child, and possibly also to the more congenial soil for piety in woman's heart than in man's.——From Acts 16: 1 we learn that his mother was a believing Jewess; his father a Greek.

6. Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

7. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

"Wherefore" [for which cause]—*i. e.*, because I am sure thy faith is genuine. Therefore I now remind thee to stir up that gift, as fire is enkindled to greater intensity by stirring. The "gift" referred to ["charisma"] included those spiritual endowments for the gospel ministry which came from the Holy Ghost in connection with the imposition of hands in ordination. Timothy was, perhaps, depressed by the imprisonment and probable martyrdom of his beloved father, and therefore needed this reminder to re-enkindle his languid graces, remembering that the spirit God gives his faithful ministers is not one of cowardice

* ὡς.

["fear"], but rather of "power" [almost a synonym for the Spirit himself], and "of love"—love undying, energizing, pervading the whole moral being; and "of a sound mind"—a mind well balanced and well under self-control—the last being vital among the endowments of the Spirit, inasmuch as strong mental excitement sometimes disturbs the balance of the human mind. Such disturbance, damaging to the proper control of good sense, is never a legitimate fruit of the Spirit, and should be studiously avoided as pernicious both to personal piety and to the public influence of Christianity.

8. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

Along with me [even as I do] suffer affliction for the gospel [in its behalf].—"According to the power of God" assumes that this power of the Spirit is given us to tone up our Christian courage to any endurance.

9. Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began;

10. But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

These are inducements to Christian courage and to any extreme of endurance to which God may call us. Remember him who hath saved and called us unto holiness, not because of antecedent good works of ours, but of his eternal love and consequent gracious purpose—older than time, but made manifest in the advent of the Son, appearing in human flesh. This appearing was his first advent when he wrought the results here put in the words, "Abolished death," etc. "Death" must here be directly antithetic to the "life brought to light through the gospel." It is essentially that empire and dominion of evil which, beginning with sin, involved the race in natural death and its concurrent sufferings, not merely physical, but perhaps more immediately and fundamentally spiritual. When Jesus came he smote this empire, breaking its absolute dominion and bringing in a reign of life and glorious immortality to bear sway in full antagonism to this antecedent sway of death. The writer to the Hebrews (2: 14) uses this same Greek word: "That by means of death [dying himself] he might *destroy* him who had the power of death—that is, the devil." The precise sense of the verb ["destroy"]* is to put out of the way; to make of none effect; to render inoperative.——So life and immortality, never fully brought to light before, are now revealed in and through the gospel.

* καταργεω.

11. Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

12. For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

Holding this commission, I suffer gladly; I can not be ashamed; for I know the unutterable glories of Him in whom I trust; I have seen him face to face and have experienced his power to save. My immortal being I have entrusted to his keeping, with never a fear that he can fail me.

13. Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

14. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

No emphasis should be laid upon "form" as opposed to substance. Paul refers to the system of doctrine which he had taught his son Timothy in wholesome words—words which well expressed the truth, and which, therefore, should not be given up in exchange for words less fitting. Hold them fast in such faith and love as have their root and sphere in Christ. Only so can the truth of the gospel be conserved in its purity.

That "good thing committed to him" as a sacred deposit at his ordination, let him be careful to keep with the help of the Holy Ghost—through his indwelling presence and power. Better counsel, how could mortal lip or pen ever give!

15. This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

This turning away (it should be noticed) was from Paul—in the sense apparently of forsaking him in his hour of greatest need. It may have been the same or only a similar forsaking as that referred to in 4: 16 below. Of the fact here referred to, we have no other history. It lay heavily on Paul's already burdened heart. The two men named are not otherwise known to us, though doubtless they were to Timothy.

16. The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain:

17. But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found *me*.

18. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

This Onesiphorus, named only here and in 4: 19, was apparently a resident of Ephesus, but happening to be in Rome during Paul's imprisonment, he took special pains to find him and to minister kindly to his wants—in no wise ashamed to show his interest in a man in irons as a malefactor. In touching words Paul prays that he may find mercy in his own day of utmost need!

The critics notice that in each passage (1: 16 and 4: 19) Paul wrote—"to the house"—in the sense of household, and not to him only. Whether this means blessings on his family for *his* sake, or for their own sake as in spirit with their father—we are free to our own opinion. But the notion that the father—Paul's benefactor—was at this time dead, and that Paul prayed for his soul after his death, is a wild and far-fetched fancy which must labor hard for any plausible support.

CHAPTER II.

Sundry exhortations—to be strong in grace (v. 1); to train other men to teach the same truths (v. 2); to endure hardship as a true soldier of Christ and do faithful service for him (v. 3–7); to remember his risen Savior; also that suffering even to death for him can never fail of its reward (v. 8–13); to shun profitless logomachy; to present the truth wisely for the purposes of righteousness (v. 14, 15); more against vain babblings and their results (v. 16–18); but the church and truth of God are safe and sure (v. 19); how to have honor therein (v. 20, 21); personal counsels (v. 22, 23); how to treat opposers (v. 24–26).

1. Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

Be thou strengthened [made strong] in and by means of that grace [moral support] which comes through Christ Jesus.

2. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

"The things thou hast heard of me," etc., may allude to the embodied presentation of the gospel to Timothy at his ordination. That, we may suppose, was in the presence of ["among"] many witnesses. An allusion to Timothy's ordination charge and to the truths then made prominent would be specially pertinent in this connection. Let him transmit the truths, then put in his keeping,

to faithful men that they may teach yet others. Thus let the gospel word pass down through successive generations of faithful, competent teachers.

3. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

4. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

5. And if a man also strive for masteries, *yet* is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

6. The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits.

7. Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

"Endure hardness" is in itself expressive; but the most approved text includes yet another idea—that of fellowship, association, with the writer, Paul. Do thou jointly with me, endure suffering as a good soldier of Christ. No man who enters the army, becoming a soldier for his country, encumbers himself with other worldly business—never thinks of filling another profession—that he may please him who enrolls and accepts him as a soldier. So also, if one enters the lists of contest for the prize, he will have no crown unless he conforms to the rules in all such cases provided. The laboring husbandman must first share the fruit. His very toil gives him the prior claim—a principle which the Great Lord of the harvest can never forget.

8. Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead, according to my gospel:

9. Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil-doer, *even* unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

It is often refreshing to recall these two facts pertaining to Jesus Christ: (*a*) his real human nature, as of the seed of David; and (*b*) his resurrection from the dead—in which lie garnered many glorious hopes.——In behalf of this gospel I suffer affliction as if I were a malefactor—a real criminal against society—even to the extent of being bound in chains:—but, to my great joy, God's word is not bound. The gospel travels on in its majestic freedom and strength, though I am held in my prison-cell! To the noble heart of Paul, this was a living joy.

10. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

11. *It is* a faithful saying: For if we be dead with *him*, we shall also live with *him:*

12. If we suffer, we shall also reign with *him:* if we deny *him,* he also will deny us:

13. If we believe not, *yet* he abideth faithful: he can not deny himself.

Suffering and dying with Christ are here in their literal rather than their spiritual sense, having reference to persecution and martyrdom, and not specially to dying unto sin in the sense then common with Paul in other connections. Of course Paul assumes that this suffering and dying for Christ are in sincere love and fidelity. Then they insure this reward. His eye may have been upon those words of Christ (Luke 12: 8, 9); "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God; but he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God."

14. Of these things put *them* in remembrance, charging *them* before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, *but* to the subverting of the hearers.

15. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

These admonitions against word-strifes, logomachies, hair-splitting distinctions—tending to no profit whatever; degenerating even to "profane and vain babblings,"—enable us to reproduce the men described—men of subtle mind, of ambitious spirit, making religious teaching their profession; struggling for distinction in this line; compassing sea and land to make proselytes;—but as to any true piety, heartless and barren, and consequently pernicious to the full extent of their social and intellectual power. ——All unlike them, let Timothy labor to approve himself—not before and unto men, but toward and unto God—a workman never to be put to shame.——"Dividing rightly the word of truth"—not (as our translation might suggest) in the sense of carving it out in due portions; but more nearly in the sense of Paul's verb —*cutting a strait path* morally—using gospel truth wisely to raise up a highway of holiness.——The context puts this advice to Timothy in contrast with the striving about words, to no profit but only to the subverting of the hearers. On the contrary let him make the word of truth in his lips bear toward an upright life in the straight line of righteousness.

16. But shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

17. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus;

18. Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

"Babblings" over what professes to be the truth of God, work only unto more ungodliness, the virus perpetuating itself and spreading like a gangrene in the human body. An illustrative case is given—of men who hold that "the resurrection is past already"—which of course carries with it the denial of a future resurrection, and indeed of any resurrection whatever in its true sense. By what perversions of God's word they managed to dispose of the doctrine of a future resurrection of the body, Paul deemed it of no importance to explain; for such vain babblings never pay for the repeating. It need not be assumed that they had either logic or sense in their teachings. But it was sad that they should "overthrow the faith of some."

19. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

20. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor.

21. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, *and* prepared unto every good work.

Yet such teaching, though ruinous to the faith of some supposed to be believers, can by no means overturn "the foundation of God." This "standeth sure."——But, in its precise idea, what is this "foundation of God?"——It seems to involve these two closely related elements; the true church, and the gospel system of truth:—perhaps we may say—the church as the living embodiment and divinely ordained conservator of the gospel. The sentiment is essentially that which Paul has (1 Tim. 3: 15)—"The house of God which is the church of the living God—*the pillar and ground of the truth.*"——This sense of the words is in harmony with the foregoing context—viz., "the seal" which this foundation bears; and also with the following context—the allusion to "the great house" and its various furniture. The antecedent context puts this foundation in contrast with the overthrown faith of misled, seduced men.——The two elements of the "seal" which both identify and secure this "foundation of God," are (*a.*) On the divine side, that the Lord knoweth his own, and will shield them against being seduced fundamentally and fatally; so that—so shielded—both his truth and his church shall surely stand in glory and in strength: and (*b.*) On the human side, this one supreme law must bear sway;—Whoever takes Christ's name upon himself must eschew all iniquity. Only as the church stands to her moral purity can she be the pillar and ground of the truth.——Thus with God on the Godward side shielding his own; and his people on the human side, holding all truth in righteousness and living it forth in their godly lives, the

church and in it the eternal truth of God, are forever sure.——In a great house there are all sorts of vessels—some of gold, some of earth; some for the noblest and some for the humblest use. Now if a man purge himself from all errors—imperfect notions of the truth, and also from moral blemishes of life, he may, in God's great house—the church—be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, meet for the Master's use—an illustration of striking fitness and force, well adapted to impress the richest moral lessons upon the first and all the future Timothies.

22. Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Youth has its temptations; how jealously should the servant of God flee the presence of whatever may excite them!——Availing himself of the law of the expulsion of a baser by the fostering of a nobler passion, let him follow with utmost endeavor after righteousness, faith, love, peace—that so this pressing of soul after the higher and nobler may eclipse and rule out the baser.

23. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.

24. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient;

25. In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

26. And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

Another feature in the character of the errorists of Ephesus is prominent here;—they were bigoted controversialists—passionately fond of controversy, which they seem to have pushed strenuously, not to say—fiercely. The true servant of the Lord must not strive in this sense of the word.——"Patient" here must presuppose abuses, injuries, which he is to bear with unruffled temper and in no spirit of resistance. Most admirable is this advice —to instruct in all meekness those who set themselves against him and against the truth, if possibly, hopefully, God may interpose in his grace to give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth—such repentance of soul as will bring them to know and love the truth—that so they may, by their earnest endeavor, escape from the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him and held at his will.——The reader will notice that the repentance of such men hangs upon the contingency of a fearful "peradventure:" that it must be labored for with the utmost wisdom, and with care not to repel them still more; that success turns essentially upon God's merciful interposition to "give them repentance:" that the devil holds them fearfully in his wily net;

and as Paul's words suggest, that rescue from such a power is like the return of the forlorn drunkard to sobriety, or of the man of wrecked reason to his rational senses. The blending and interaction of divine with human agencies are here put forcibly and most instructively. Manifestly Paul had not only the great wisdom that comes from God but the subsidiary wisdom of the soundest philosophy of the human mind, and of admirable common sense.

CHAPTER III.

Perilous times in the future, and the men who make them so described (v. 1–5), their doings continued (v. 6–9). Paul refers to his past life and sufferings (v. 10–12), and again to seducers (v. 13); exhorts Timothy to steadfast faith in view of the reliable sources of his knowledge (v. 14, 15) the Holy Scriptures being truly inspired of God and supremely profitable to the man of God (v. 16, 17).

1. This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

2. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

3. Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

4. Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

5. Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

The word "last," said of "days," indicates a period apparently still later in time than the "latter" days of 1 Tim. 4: 1. It should refer to the times next preceding the end of the gospel age and the final coming of Christ.——Judging from the context these days are "perilous," not so much for the personal danger they bring upon God's people as for the grave apostasy then to be and the awful depravity of the leading men. It should be noted that this corresponds with Paul's teachings (2 Thess. 2: 3–12)—not to say also to those of the Revelator John (Rev. 20: 7–10).

In v. 2 the clause "for men shall be," should be read—"For *the* men shall be—men generally; men in masses—which indicates an apostasy of no small extent.——"Shall be self-lovers"—to the extent of supreme selfishness—the root of all human depravity being supreme devotion to self, and of course necessarily, entire

apostasy from God. Legitimately, according to all just philosophy of mind and of sin, this stands first in the dark catalogue.——"Covetous" claims the second place of right—certainly so if the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil.——"Boasters, proud," —well-known manifestations of supreme selfishness and consummate depravity.——"Blasphemers"—men of foul, abusive words —sometimes used toward God; sometimes toward man. Here apparently toward God, because as toward men, "false accusers," below, presents their sin. Blasphemy God-ward is in words and in spirit insulting, abusive, profane.——"Disobedient to parents" —by easy association comes next; for the men who have no respect for God will readily come to be reckless of all due respect to parents and to their authority.——"Unthankful"; for there can be no place for gratitude in hearts so selfish and so utterly lost to all sense of moral obligation.——"Unholy" suggests the utter absence in their souls of what in moral beings is most pure, most noble, most lovely.——"Without natural affection"—sunk so low morally that their depravity has quenched the natural instincts which bind our species in social bonds and which we notice to admire in the lower animals.——"Truce-breakers" is more precisely, *non-truce-makers*, *i. e.*, who want full sweep for their selfish proclivities and who repel the least restraint in the line of compact, treaty, covenant,—being too depraved even to make a covenant; quite below the grade of civilization which treaties and compacts assume.——"False accusers"—unfortunately too common to need explanation.——"Incontinent"—without self-control. "Fierce" is precisely savage, untamed—after the style of ferocious wild beasts.——"Despisers"—literally *non-lovers* of good men—as we should expect.——"Traitors"—probably, in the sense of betraying Christians unto their persecutors.——"Heady"—is head-strong, self-willed.—The Greek word for "high-minded" we have met (1 Tim. 3: 6 and 6: 4), in the sense, puffed with pride to an extent damaging to sober sense, inducing a befogged understanding—an obtuse perception of the proprieties of life.——"Holding the form of godliness"—but lost to its power; disowning its moral claims. This indicates extreme apostasy because it involves sinning against light.——From all such, turn thyself utterly away. Paul seems to think these men more utterly hopeless as to Christian effort than the opposers referred to (2: 25, 26) whom he exhorts Timothy to labor for, if so be, their repentance may yet be possible.

6. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

7. Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

From this class come proselyters for whose spirit and ways Paul has very little respect. Creeping into houses: leading captive small women, broken-down morally with sin and crime. Accord-

ing to the original, it is these little women and not those who creep into their houses to lead them astray—who are "ever learning and never able to reach the knowledge of the truth." "Ever learning"—in the sense (probably) of a low itching curiosity, a ceaseless quest of something newer as food for gossip:—at least such is human nature, in our age. That such minds should ever come to know the truth is not to be expected, for such knowledge assumes a certain nobility of character.

8. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

9. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all *men*, as theirs also was.

Moses (Ex. 7: 11, 22 and 8: 7, 18, 19) gave the fact of this withstanding by the magicians of Egypt; but not their names. These names seem to have been known among the Greeks and Romans at a date too early to admit of their having learned them from Paul. Theodoret (an early Father) states expressly that Paul learned these names, not from the divine Scriptures, but from the unwritten teachings of the Jews. Whether this tradition was only and wholly oral, or on the other hand, had the aid of written documents, ultimately lost, it is impossible now to determine. ——As to the point of comparison between those magicians and these of the "last days," it may have been in their spirit only, or in their methods, or in both. Nothing forbids the supposition that the latter class used magic arts.——Alike they were men of debased, morally corrupt mind.——"Reprobate as to the faith"—the word implying that they had been *proved*, tried, with opportunities to know the truth; perhaps with some knowledge of the truth; but, resisting that truth, they became morally dead to its power and were consequently disowned of God—abandoned as hopeless. Thus they became "reprobate" by means of and so by reason of their wicked resistance of truth up to a point where truth lost its power over their morally wrecked nature. The reader may see Paul's usage of this word "rebrobate" in Rom. 1: 28 and 1 Cor. 9: 27 and 2 Cor. 13: 5–7 and Tit. 1: 16.——"They shall proceed no further" looks toward further extension of their influence. The folly of these shall become manifest as was also the folly of those, when they were shown to be powerless to cope with Moses.

Pausing here one moment upon the problem: Where in time relative to Timothy's life-work lay the development of these apostate men? The reader will notice—(1) They are supposed to be "in the last days;" *i. e.*, shortly antecedent to Christ's final coming: (2) They, or at least, such men as they, were already beginning to appear—"creeping into houses;" and from these Timothy is exhorted to "turn away" (v. 5). (3) To harmonize these points we have no better theory than this: that Paul did not

know *when* in time the final coming was to be. The Spirit may have shown him some of its immediate antecedents, yet with no date of *time* as to their full development. Jesus never attempted to teach his disciples the date in calendar time. On the contrary, he positively excluded the date from the pale of prophetic revelation—a fact which is often unaccountably overlooked.

10. But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience,

11. Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of *them* all the Lord delivered me.

12. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Timothy had known Paul most thoroughly—not his outer life only but his heart, his purpose, his faith and love and patience, and particularly his persecutions. Of the latter, the specifications made here—Antioch (in Pisidia Acts 13: 50); Iconium (Acts 14: 2); and Lystra (Acts 14: 14, 15), may have been selected out of many, either because of their greater severity, or because of Timothy's better personal knowledge of them. We know that these involved the torture of stoning and scourging and no small peril of life.——Such an example might well be a moral tonic to his beloved Timothy and to every Christian soldier.——"All who *will* to live," etc.—stronger than a mere future tense—this being a verb of *willing*, with the sense—All who are fully purposed in heart, solemnly consecrated to live a godly life in Christ.

13. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

As through grace godliness has a self-perpetuating power, so has sin—this antithesis being apparently the suggestive link of thought between this verse and the preceding. Evil men, especially seducers, go on progressing from bad to worse; deceiving others as a business, they become more thoroughly self-deceived. First, imposing lies upon others as the truth, they come to believe their own lies to be true. The mind's sense of truth and power of moral discrimination, long abused, at length collapses, dies out, and leaves the soul, both intellectually and morally, a wreck. This is "waxing worse and worse" with terrible vengeance!

Comparing this verse with v. 9 above, that referred to outer progress; this to inner: that being extensive; this intensive: that denied progress in the way of making converts; this affirms progress in the line of their own more fearful depravity of mind and heart.

14. But continue thou in the things which thou hast

learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them;*

15. And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

But on a totally different line of progress, go thou forward steadfastly, holding fast to the divine and blessed truth thou hast learned with a certainty so assuring, remembering that those sacred writings—the sources of thy knowledge—are truly divine, and therefore able to make thee wise unto salvation, being received with the faith that has its power and life in Christ Jesus.

16. All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17. That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

On the first clause of v. 16—"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God"—able and really excellent critics differ somewhat widely in their construction and interpretation. One class sustain the translation given in the authorized version; others [with Ellicott, Alford, etc.] give it—"Every Scripture inspired by God [or being inspired by God] is also profitable for doctrine," etc. It should not be charged against these excellent critics that they purposely open the door for the inference which worse men will make—viz., since every Scripture that is inspired may be much less in amount that "all Scripture," and only the former amount is inspired and profitable; therefore men are left to rule out from the pale of inspiration such books, or portions of books, as they judge to be not inspired and therefore not profitable.——Yet their construction does open the door to this inference. Hence in part the deep interest which legitimately gathers about this investigation.

The fundamental question—never to be shirked and never to be swamped under any pre-judgment, is simply—*What did Paul mean?*

The debatable ground is scarcely at all in the Lexicon. A small part is in the domain of grammar—grammatical laws and usages; but a much larger part is in that of exegesis as pending upon the context—the course of thought and the manifest purpose of the writer.——In addition to these, some critics (*e. g.*, Ellicott) make large account of the interpretation put upon the passage by the early church fathers—a source of testimony which, to say the least, may be overestimated.

The grammatical argument is not readily made clear to one not familiar with the Greek tongue.——Putting their best English

equivalents in the place and the order of the successive Greek words and omitting "*is*," for which there is no Greek, we have it thus:

All [or every] Scripture—God-breathed—and [or also] profitable, etc.

Now we have these questions: Does "all" mean every? Does the verb to be supplied (*i. e.*, the verb *is*) come in before "God-breathed" [inspired] so as to read, *is* God-breathed and is therefore profitable; or should it come in after the word for "inspired" and immediately before "profitable"?——Grammarians would put this main question in these terms:—Is the word for "inspired" a mere adjective, qualifying "Scripture," or is it what they call a predicate, *i. e.*, a word having essentially the force of a verb?

Our main question as to the sense of the passage can not be decided by grammatical laws and usages. Either of the two rival constructions may find support. We are therefore thrown upon the laws of exegesis—*i. e.*, upon considerations coming in from the context, from the writer's line of thought, and from the nature of the case. These must decide the main question. To this field of argument, therefore, let us turn.

Let it be borne well in mind that on v. 16 we must choose between these two interpretations:—(*a.*) All [Old Test.] Scripture is inspired of God and is therefore profitable:—or (*b.*) Every inspired portion of this Scripture is profitable, etc. I accept the former and reject the latter; and on these grounds:

1. It is undeniable that v. 15 speaks of the *whole Old Testament* under the phrase—"the Holy Scriptures"—and declares that those Scriptures are able to make wise unto salvation. Therefore we can not reasonably suppose that v. 16 speaks of any thing *less* than the whole. Paul is speaking of the whole and not of a part.

2. The purpose and aim of Paul in the passage is unmistakable. He is exhorting Timothy to shun with horror the paths of Satanic delusion, and for this end to abide firmly in the truth taught him from his youth in the Sacred Scriptures.——At this point and onward we look for an advance in the thought, to put more force into his exhortation by developing his argment more fully. Does he seek this additional force by saying: "Every scripture that is inspired is profitable?" Timothy might well have answered: Who could help knowing *that?* That is tame as a truism. To say that whatever scripture is inbreathed of God into holy men must be useful, is much too obvious to need saying.

On the other construction, how exceedingly is the force of the argument heightened when the emphasis is put upon the word "inspired!" These sacred writings are able through faith in Jesus to make thee wise unto salvation, FOR all those scriptures are fresh and full from the Divine Spirit; they are spirit-breathed from God into his chosen servants. Therefore it is that they are

able to make thee wise unto salvation; therefore they are profitable for all the uses of "the man of God."

Or let the argument be put thus: We inquire for the emphatic word of the sentence. It must be either "inspired" or "profitable."——As to the word "inspired:"—this fact of inspiration is either assumed or asserted. Under Ellicott's construction, assumed; under that of the authorized version, asserted. Assumed, it is not emphatic; asserted, it *is* so, being made the decidedly emphatic word of the sentence. Ellicott argues against its being the emphatic word that the doctrine of inspiration had not then been called in question, and therefore Paul had no occasion to assert it emphatically. To which I answer: It *is emphatic by its very nature*—by reason of its infinite importance, its towering magnitude, and therefore irrespective of the point of having been or not been denied. Make it emphatic, and you put a glorious strength, a marvelous moral force into the passage: All written scripture is breathed by God himself into the human soul of the writer! What truth more glorious than this can be conceived! This backs up the assertion next preceding, "able to make thee wise unto salvation;" it gives prodigious force to the assertion next following—viz., "profitable" for every Christian use. Hence this location of the emphasis, and this construction of the word "*inspired*" as the predicate of the sentence, the very thing affirmed, is, in the light of logic and forceful reasoning, all that can be desired. It is a declaration worthy of the mind and the heart of Paul.

But, on the other construction, to slide over the fact of inspiration with no emphasis—not asserting, but only assuming it as an incidental thing—makes this sentence not strong, but flat. It seems scarcely too much to say that this supposed construction is disparaging to the known good sense of the great apostle.

3. To put what is essentially the same point in a slightly varied form: V. 16 does one of two things—either (*a*) it advances in the argument to say that all the Old Testament is truly God-breathed, inspired, and therefore must be profitable for all uses, or (*b*) it flats down to this, that whatever portion of it may be inspired will be profitable, leaving Timothy to judge, with no standard to judge by, how much or how little of it may be taken as from God. Apart from the fatal weakness of uncertainty over the question how much or how little of it is inspired, we have the very tame declaration that so much of it as is inspired must be useful!

Between these two constructions I must choose the one which gives us strong logic; which makes Paul's words mighty in rich and glorious truth; which backs up the points made in v. 15 with unparalleled force. I must choose strength rather than weakness; strong, pertinent logic as against tame truism—because Paul is a very sensible man, a very logical writer, and has therefore an honest claim to be read and construed accordingly.

4. To make the passage affirm only this—that so much of the Scripture as is inspired of God is profitable—does really leave the

question *how much* both open and uncertain. This uncertainty is not only damaging to its practical force, but virtually fatal. For what is to be the test for separating the inspired from the not inspired portion? If Paul left this question open, to be settled by each reader, it was a capital oversight in him to omit the needful test for its decision. Such a test would have been incomparably more important than to affirm that so much as is inspired will be useful. The latter we could easily spare, but the former can by no means be spared; and Paul is the last man to ignore its importance, or pass it with no notice.

5. Undeniably, Jesus indorsed the Old Testament Scriptures as a whole. (See John 5: 39 and Luke 16: 29, 31.) If Paul accepted this indorsement of the whole upon Christ's authority, it is fair to assume that he meant in this passage to indorse the whole and did *not* mean to indorse a part only—*i. e.*, only so much as may be inspired. Moreover, if Paul did purposely take issue with his Lord on this point—one of such magnitude—we may doubtless assume that he would at least have made his demurrer very distinct, not omitting his reasons! But whose heart and whose mind do not recoil from this supposition?

6. Some critics make great account of the grammatical usage of the Greek word for all ("pas"), when put, as here, before a noun in the singular number and without the article, insisting that it must mean *every* and not *all*. This is a question of usage. But the point made by those critics can by no means be maintained. The New Testament supplies cases by scores [I have before me a list of sixty-nine from Matthew to Philemon inclusive] in which this word means all rather than every, in position grammatically the same as here. Thus: "Herod was troubled, and *all* Jerusalem with him" [not *every* Jerusalem] (Matt. 2: 3). "It becometh us to fulfill *all* [not *every*] righteousness" (Matt. 3: 15). "That upon you may come all righteous blood shed upon earth," etc. (Matt. 23: 35.) "*All* power is given unto me" (Matt. 28: 18). Or take Paul's own usage: "Wrath revealed from heaven against *all* ungodliness" (Rom. 1: 18). "So *all* Israel shall be saved" (Rom. 11: 26). "The God of hope fill you with *all* joy," etc. (Rom. 15: 13.) And so on, till in Paul's thirteen epistles we count forty-six cases. This ought to be enough for the question of usage.

7. Notice should be taken of the usage of the word for "Scripture." * If this word is in use for the whole Old Testament canon, the common construction becomes impregnable. On the contrary, if it had been in common use for the separate books of the Old Testament, or for portions of the canon *as distinct from the whole*, this usage would have some force in favor of the sense—every such portion, being inspired, is profitable.——Facts of usage show that both the plural and the singular of this word are in common use for the Old Testament canon. Cases of the singular may be seen in John 2: 23, and 7: 38, 42, and 10: 35,

* γραφη.

and 13: 18, etc. "They believed the scripture;" "As the scripture hath said;" "Has not the scripture said;" "The scripture can not be broken."—Thus the testimony of usage on this point is all that can be desired in proof of its meaning the whole Old Testament. It is never used for a part of the canon as distinct from the whole.

Hence the passage should be translated, "All scripture *is* God-breathed," etc.

As to these uses in detail, all is plain. Here are truths good to believe for doctrine; good to reprove of sin; good for righting up the stumbling and for correcting the erring; finally, good for that instruction which works unto righteousness. "The man of God," as thought of here, is not the Christian teacher alone, but any and every man who is willing to be taught of God through his revealed word. Every such man may equip himself thoroughly from this storehouse of all needful truth, so as to be fully furnished for all good works.

CHAPTER IV

A solemn charge to Timothy (v. 1, 2); with special reasons (v. 3, 4), and a more particular specification of his duties (v. 5): impressed by reference to his own near approaching death, his conquering Christian life, and his expected crown (v. 6–8). Closing special directions (v. 9–13); the case of the coppersmith (v. 14, 15); allusion to his first hearing before the Roman court (v. 16–18), with closing salutations, requests and benedictions (v. 18–22).

1. I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2. Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.

This "charge" has all the dignity of a solemn adjuration before God and the Lord Jesus. Indeed it is better to give the last clause of v. 1, ["at his appearing," etc.] the sense of an adjuration. There being no authority for saying *at* his appearing, let it read *by* [I charge thee *by*] his august appearing, and by the inauguration of his final, heavenly kingdom.

"Be instant"—in the sense—Be on hand; on the alert; always ready to strike.——"In season; out of season"—in times good or not good; under opportunities fair or not fair; to improve the favorable moment fully, and as to the unfavorable, make the best of them.——Perhaps our version—"out of season"—might be abused; for some things are so very much "out of season" as

should preclude their being done. Paul's word is simply negative—denying any thing favorable; not touching the case of what is positively unseasonable.——Moreover, the question arises whether this distinction as to seasonable refers to Timothy himself; or to his hearers. Does Paul exhort Timothy to push on in sunshine or in storm; sick or well; weak or strong? Or does he think of the men to be labored for, as more or as less accessible? The context favors the latter; for the time may come when you can reach men only with extremest difficulty.

3. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

4. And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

There are moral states of mind in which pure unvarnished truth is very distasteful; really unendurable. It is men of this sort (and not their teachers) who have "itching ears;" who therefore accumulate for themselves teachers, good to tickle their ears for them.——As if this were the exalted function of men sent of God to preach his holy gospel!——Yes, there are men who turn their ears away from what is unwelcome, merely because it is too true, and who turn themselves, with the proclivities of natural affinity, unto myths, fables—amusing and not adapted to trouble the conscience.

5. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

Paul's word for "watch" means primarily—*be sober*, yet in the sense of a wakeful, sound, earnest mind.——"The work of an evangelist" was auxiliary to that of the apostles. He was an associate helper; ready for every emergency; preaching, teaching, doing all subsidiary work as occasion might arise. It seems never to have constituted a special class, as that of bishop or presbyter; and deacon.——"Make full proof of thy ministry" in the sense of discharging all its functions; performing faithfully all its duties.

6. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

7. I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith:

8. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

"Offered"—strictly *poured out* as the libations in the Mosaic ritual. My life-blood is ready—and is to flow soon. Paul's

martyrdom was under the axe of the executioner.——"The time for my departure" from earth to my other home—is at hand.——Then sweeping his eye over his life-work of more than thirty years—comparing it to a fight hand to hand, he had fought it well; or to a foot-race in the Olympian games, he had finished it grandly; or to a life-struggle to hold it fast, he had kept the gospel faith—unsoiled in its purity, unabated in its power, untarnished in its glory!——And it was in no spirit of vanity that these reminiscences of his wonderful life bore to him this consoling and morally sublime testimony. There was intrinsic fitness in placing this life-sketch of his toils and struggles and manifold endurances before the susceptible mind of Timothy to inspire him to follow an example of which it was naturally impossible that Paul should feel ashamed. It was never in Paul's heart to parade his marvelous life-record for display; nor did he give place to a prudish delicacy which would forbid allusion to it even to dearest friends.

On one occasion, quite other than this his mouth had been forced open by the invidious slanders of—somebody—in Corinth; and Paul, though the words it extorted from his lips sounded like self-praise and made him seem almost a fool (so he said), yet he did give a graphic sketch [any body can read it in 2 Cor 11] —which in point of immense and unceasing labor; of intense and mighty endeavors; of abuse and torture and manifold sufferings, borne with most heroic spirit, stands in all human history unequaled—certainly unsurpassed.——From the point where he now stood, this was a life-landscape, as seen looking backward.

There was another life, open to the front a forward view, of things in prospect;—the crown of righteousness, awaiting Christian conquerors. It was held (he could see) in the hand of the Great Judge, to be awarded to the faithful. Paul had no doubt it awaited himself and the scene of its realization was full in his view.——His personal joy in this prospect did not preclude the kindred joy, that the same crown was ready equally for all who in heart loved the same Redeemer and his appearing.

9. Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me:

10. For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

11. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

12. And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.

13. The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring *with thee*, and the books, *but* especially the parchments.

Here we have the somewhat remarkable fact in Christian experience—that though his consolations in Christ were apparently perfect, and his anticipations of future glory rose even to rapture,

yet his human soul longed for the personal presence and sympathy of human friends. His heart pines to see his beloved Timothy. Many of his friends had left him, or for various reasons were absent. He feels bereaved and desolate. One had forsaken him through love of this present world; another and another had gone till only Luke remained. Apparently he felt the lack of his personal liberty in these slow hours of his prison solitude; hence those books and parchments would be particularly welcome. Also in view of the approaching winter (v. 21) "that cloak." We hope Timothy was able to reach him with these comforts in due time.

14. Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works:

15. Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words.

Of this particular coppersmith (Alexander) nothing else is known. Timothy is now, supposably, in Ephesus; the silversmith mob (of Acts 19: 23–41) illustrates to us the business antagonism between the "smiths" and the gospel of Christ—so that we need have no special difficulty in filling out sufficiently the details of his persecutions of the apostle. Timothy, being there, was exposed to the same hostile spirit, and the same subtle, malign opposition.

16. At my first answer no man stood with me, but all *men* forsook me: *I pray God* that it may not be laid to their charge.

17. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

18. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve *me* unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.

Of this first hearing before the tribunal of the Cæsars (*i. e.*, the first during and resulting from this second imprisonment) we have no other details. Human friends by his side he had none; why they forsook him in this trying hour, we are left to conjecture. Like his great Master ("Father, forgive them") he too prayed: "Let it not be laid to their charge!"——But the Lord stood with him and gave him strength. The strength he specially sought and consequently found was not so much to make an able defense and secure an acquittal, as strength to improve this (possibly) last opportunity to testify for Christ from the royal tribunal and before the august court of the Roman Empire—"that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear." This was morally sublime! This—we might perhaps say—was unlike any other man, but *not* unlike

the great apostle of the Gentiles.——Though the question at issue is to him one of life or death, yet to preach Christ before that tribunal was more to him than this decision upon his life.

"I was delivered (this time) from mouth of lion" (so his words read) omitting, perhaps purposely any more specific allusion to individuals; leaving only the general sense—deliverance from this peril.——He accepted this deliverance as a fresh assurance that his Lord would also deliver him from every evil machination, unto his heavenly kingdom.

19. Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

20. Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.

21. Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.

22. The Lord Jesus Christ *be* with thy spirit. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

This Prisca (elsewhere Priscilla) with her husband Aquila, first seen in the sacred history at Corinth (Acts 18: 1–5); next at Ephesus (Acts 18: 24–26); also at Rome (Rom. 16: 3–6) are still remembered tenderly by the apostle.——The closing benediction is specially rich: "The Lord [Jesus] be with thy spirit." What could he have said more expressive, more touching, more tenderly dear to his young friend?

So this paragon of all epistles comes to its close.

THE EPISTLE TO TITUS.

INTRODUCTION.

Of the personal history of Titus, it is well to gather into one general view the little that is known. He is not named in Acts; but if (as is credibly supposed) Paul's journey to Jerusalem, referred to (Gal. 2: 1) is the same with that of Acts 15: 2, he was included among the "certain others" who went with Paul and Barnabas from Antioch to Jerusalem to the great Council (A. D. 50.)

Unlike Timothy who had Jewish blood on the mother's side, Titus was a Greek, and as such, Paul refused to require his circumcision (Gal. 2: 3–5). Inasmuch as Paul calls him his own son in the faith (Tit. 1: 4), we may account him one of Paul's converts, probably of Antioch, and so among the very early fruits of Paul's labors. In addition to these points of his early history, we find allusion to him in 2 Cor. 2: 13 and 7: 6, 13–15 and 8: 6, 16, 23, and 12: 18—from which it appears that he had been intimately associated with Paul in gospel labors; that Paul had the highest confidence in his integrity and sincere devotion to Christ and not least in the deep affection of his heart. Paul speaks of his great disappointment in not finding him at Troas; of his being comforted by the coming of Titus to him in Macedonia where he was writing 2 Corinthians, of the important service he rendered (presumably) in enforcing the needful discipline in the important case at Corinth and in bringing the offender to repentance—of all which he brought word to Paul, greatly to his relief and joy (2 Cor. 7: 6–15). Another very responsible service he accomplished at Corinth in the collection taken up there for the suffering saints in Jerusalem (2 Cor. 12: 18).

Historical allusions to Titus appear in this epistle, showing that he had accompanied Paul to Crete; had been left there to set in order things that remained undone or at least

unfinished; and particularly to superintend the ordination of elders in every city. This epistle is a manual of instructions for this supervising work. It is therefore a *pastoral* letter in the same class with those to Timothy, having the same general object, and differing only as the circumstances in Crete might differ in minor points from those at Ephesus.

As to the *date* of this epistle we seem authorized to place it between the two to Timothy—later than the first; earlier than the second.——He wrote from Ephesus, and in the autumn of A. D. 66 or 67; speaks (3 : 12) of a purpose to pass the ensuing winter at Nicopolis (supposed to be the city of that name in Epirus) to which city he urges Titus to come without fail. At this city it is supposed he was arrested and taken thence to Rome—his last imprisonment—which terminated in his martyrdom.——[Smith's *Bible Dictionary* ("Titus") has a very compact presentation of the known incidents in his personal history.]

THE EPISTLE TO TITUS.

CHAPTER I.

The introduction (v. 1–4); the object of leaving him at Crete (v. 5); the ordination of elders; their specific qualifications (v. 6–9); to counteract the influence of bad men, here described (v. 10–16).

1. Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;

2. In the hope of eternal life, which God, that can not lie, promised before the world began;

3. But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Savior;

4. To Titus, *mine* own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.

In v. 1 the words—"according to the faith" fail to give the sense; for Paul's apostleship was in no proper sense graduated *according* to this faith, or made to correspond with it. His words mean—was exercised *in behalf* of this faith; had for its object the promotion of this faith, and also the diffusion of right knowledge of the truth which is unto godliness (*unto*, not "after").—— This rested as its ultimate object upon the hope of eternal life, which God—infinitely truthful—had "promised before the world began." This last clause is literally, *before eternal ages*—said apparently with allusion to the eternal purpose of God's love in which it had its birth—the word "eternal" being, we may suppose, suggested by his use of the same word applied to "life"—"eternal life." This eternal life had its root—its ultimate source—in God's eternal purpose of love out of which all gospel promises come.——"In due times"—is more precisely—*in his own times*—times determined in his own wisdom—the reference being to the gospel age as the time to reveal the gospel by means of the preaching of men like Paul.——"To Titus, mine *own* son"—in the sense of having been converted under Paul's instrumentality. This endearing relationship, it was Paul's perpetual joy

to recognize—never without grateful thanks to the God of all grace.

5. For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:

6. If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.

How early the gospel was planted in Crete is not certainly known. There were Cretans among the hearers of Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2: 11).——In this populous island were a considerable number of cities, having churches, each of which needed help in selecting and ordaining suitable pastors. This service required more time than Paul could give. He therefore left his faithful son Titus to finish it, and wisely wrote him these instructions.

The point of first importance was the selection of well-qualified men for "elders." Note that Paul uses "elder" and "bishop" interchangeably—"elders" in v. 5; but "bishop" in v. 7 when he speaks of their qualifications. The word "elder" contemplates age, dignity of character; "bishop" looks toward the service of spiritual oversight, care, and labor.——"Blameless," above reproach.——"The husband of one wife," unquestionably shuts off the polygamist. Some critics suppose it also excludes the man who had married a second wife after the decease of the first. But Paul's words do not necessarily or even naturally include this case, and therefore his authority should never be claimed against *such* second marriages.——"Having believing children"—who moreover are not dissolute or disobedient to their parents. A well-trained household would be one of the best proofs of the father's qualifications to take the analogous care of "the house of God." If, on the contrary, he had made a failure in the care and training of his own household, how could he be trusted to do better in the pastoral care of the church? (See 1 Tim. 3: 4, 5, 12.)

7. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

8. But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

9. Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

A steward (oikonomos) has charge of the household—its business manager. The bishop serves under God in a similar capacity.——The qualifications named here will mostly interpret themselves.——The "self-willed" quality of character would surely

make trouble; for the real merits of each case should decide it, and no *make-weight* of self-will should ever be thrown into the scale. Men opinionated, proud, standing upon personal dignity, dull of vision to see any thing bearing against their own notions, are always troublers in Zion.——Not irascible in temper: not propense to wine: not quick to resent and strike back. Not a man for base gain—in which we may notice that Paul has no respect—certainly no soft words for this propensity to enrich one's self.——"A lover of good"—is what Paul said; and this would include good men and good things also.——"Temperate" in the broad sense—self-controlled, holding every appetite and passion in due subjection.——"The faithful word" is that which commends itself to our faith to be received as from God through the teaching of apostles. Holding this fast, he will be able by means of truthful teaching to give appropriate exhortation and to convince opponents.

10. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:

11. Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

"Unruly" is the same word as in 1 Tim. 1: 9—there translated "lawless," and also above (v. 6) of children not obedient to parents. The sense here is—men under no proper restraint, who are a law unto themselves.——Noticeably this class were mostly "of the circumcision"—Jews. A sad picture of their ways, spirit and influence!

12. One of themselves, *even* a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians *are* always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.

13. This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;

14. Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.

It is assumed that these pernicious proselyters—"they of the circumcision"—were Cretians in character. Their national characteristics had been given by one of their own poets (the word "prophet" having anciently this sense as well), viz., Epaminondas, who lived B. C. 600—a man of "rare distinction as priest, bard and seer among his countrymen."——A people at once false, savage, sensual and gluttonous—there was extreme need of the civilizing and transforming power of the gospel among them. Therefore Paul enjoins; Rebuke them sharply; bring them to sound views of gospel truth; let them eschew all Jewish myths and traditions of men, apostate from the real truth of God.

15. Unto the pure all things *are* pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving *is* nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

16. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny *him*, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

Obviously Paul has in mind Jewish notions as to things ceremonially clean and unclean, and would teach that to men of pure heart, all external things were pure—this Jewish ceremonial distinction being of not the least account as to them.——But as to men at heart defiled and unbelieving, nothing whatever could be pure; no meats, no washings of the person; no conformity to the Mosaic ritual, could give them real holiness of heart or purity of character. Their very soul—their moral nature—is defiled. Professing to know God, their lives belied this profession; their deeds proved them to have no just sense of God's character or claims upon his creatures.——"As to every good work reprobate"—means that they were altogether *disapproved* of God; disowned, rejected—as men tried but found utterly wanting.

CHAPTER II.

Instructions for aged men (v. 1, 2); for aged women and what they should teach the younger (v. 3–5); the example himself should set (v. 6–8); duties of servants (v. 9, 10); what saving gospel grace teaches and enjoins (v. 11, 12); the great moral purpose for which Christ has redeemed his people (v. 13–15).

1. But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:
2. That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

Sound, wholesome gospel truth calls for a pure Christian life. See that thou enjoin upon every class in society the duties which gospel truth, legitimately applied in their circumstances, shall indicate. Thus there are qualities of character and duties in life, specially appropriate to aged men: sobriety, gravity, self-control. "Sound" in the sense of truthful and wholesome—in respect to their faith, love, and patience. Faith, classed thus with "love" and "patience," should be the grace of the heart, rather than specially the truth itself believed. Let their faith be strong, pure, and in its moral influence purifying, controlling. So also of their love, and of their quiet endurance.

3. The aged women likewise, that *they be* in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things:

4. That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

5. *To be* discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

Let aged women adorn their sacred profession in their deportment; not slanderers (speaking against each other); not enslaved to much wine, but teaching, by precept and example, what is truly honorable.——That they train the young women into ways of sobriety: to love their husbands and their children—those beautiful domestic virtues.——All this, to the end that the word of God—the doctrine taught as from the Lord—be not evil spoken of, but rather held in honor as being conducive to the well ordered and happy family.

6. Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.

7. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine *shewing* uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

8. Sound speech, that can not be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

Like Timothy, Titus also may have been sufficiently near in age to young men to be a model for their behavior. Paul would have him exhort young men unto sound-minded sobriety, in all things making himself an example of good works.——"Sound speech"—probably referring to public discourse; let it be unexceptionable. "He of the contrary part" is in the opposition, the unconverted, and supposably the heathen who might be among his hearers,—"May be ashamed," under his conscious sense of the superior excellence of such doctrine and of such resulting life.

9. *Exhort* servants to be obedient unto their own masters, *and* to please *them* well in all things; not answering again;

10. Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.

This catalogue of the duties of bond-servants corresponds with Paul's teaching in Eph. 6: 5–8, Col. 3: 22 and 1 Tim. 6: 1.——"Not answering again," by contradiction, opposition,—"not purloining"—the vice of theft, including all forms of embezzlement, opposed to honest fidelity. So doing they will adorn the doctrine of God—will really commend it to their masters, and not least to those who were ungodly—who might so be won to appreciate the gospel.

11. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

12. Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

The collocation of the Greek words is like this:—For already has been manifested the grace of God with salvation for all men; showing the sense to be—not appeared to all men, but providing salvation for all. Paul does not by any means assert that this grace *secures* the salvation of all. Quite unlike that, his words mean that this grace bears within itself the *capabilities* of salvation for the race; makes salvation possible to all; is a grace broad enough in its vast provisions to fill the wants of all.——It aims to secure this benign result by teaching two things—(1) To deny all ungodliness and all worldly lust:—(2) To live a sober, righteous, godly life in this world.——Comprehensively, this grace comes with proffered salvation, insuring it to us for the eternal future, if so be we seek and find salvation from sin in this present world. The beginning must be here or the glorious ending can not be there. The first grand work of this gospel grace is to deliver from present sin. This done, the Lord will provide for its consummation in the life to come.——Thus Paul would utilize all the vast moral forces lying in a prospective, glorious immortality, and make it bear toward a godly life here and now.

13. Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;

14. Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

15. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

"Looking," with longing desire, "for that blessed hope"—"hope" here, not in the subjective sense—that hope whose place is within our heart; but in the objective sense—the object hoped for—here further defined as the manifestation ["appearing"] of the glory of the great God, even our Savior Jesus Christ. Beyond question this manifestation of the glory of the great God must be that of Jesus Christ in his second and final coming. The reader will notice how strongly the passage supports the real divinity of Christ—this "appearing" being obviously none other than his own at the last day:—For (*a*) this "appearing" is never (unless here) spoken of as that of the Father or of God in distinction from Jesus Christ, but always as the appearing of Jesus. (*b*) The preceding context has Christ specially in view in that appearing (v. 11) which brought to light the grace of salvation. (*c*) The subsequent context is wholly of Christ who gave himself for us to redeem us. (*d*) This epithet "great" can have no special pertinence as applied to the Father, but has, considered as spoken of Jesus Christ as the *Great God*: (*e*) As to the word "and" [the great God *and* our Savior] it often has

the sense, *even*, carrying the mind onward to another descriptive name of this glorious personage.

The *object* for which Christ gave himself for us is here made very distinct and emphatic:—viz., to redeem us from all iniquity —redeem by making himself a ransom for us—through his own blood.——As this clause includes the atonement made by Christ's death and the resulting pardon of the believer's sin, so the next relates to the other great department of his work—the moral purification of his people—that "he might purify unto himself a people acquired," to be held as his special property and joyful possession. Such seems to be precisely the sense of the word "peculiar," as may be seen (1 Pet. 2: 9).——Let these two coordinate and supreme objects of Christ's work in his life and in his death—redemption from the curse, and cleansing from the moral defilement, of sin—be brought to bear perpetually with their intense and momentous pressure upon our souls unto a holy, consecrated life, supremely zealous of good works. Let these be the staple themes of this good evangelist, exhorting and rebuking with all authority. A grander mission was never given to mortal man. Let him perform it with a dignity and earnestness worthy of its nature and no man can despise him.

CHAPTER III.

To obey the civil authorities (v. 1); to shun all evil-speaking and cultivate gentleness (v. 2); enforced by looking back to their own life in sin (v. 3), and to the stupendous change wrought by the manifestation of divine mercy in Christ (v. 4–7); insists that believers maintain good works (v. 8), but avoid foolish questions and controversies (v. 9). Heretics after due but unavailing admonition to be rejected (v. 10, 11); specific personal directions (v. 12, 13) with one closing exhortation to good works; salutations and greetings (v. 14, 15).

1. Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work,
2. To speak evil of no man, to be no brawler, *but* gentle, showing all meekness unto all men.

Quiet, unresisting obedience to the civil authorities was the uniform doctrine of both Christ and his apostles. There may have been special reasons in the case of the Cretians for reiterating and enforcing it. Anterior to the Roman rule which began B. C. 67, their civil institutions had been somewhat democratic—some traditionary reminiscences of which may have been lingering

still. Their national [or tribal] character seems never to have been distinguished for mildness and tractability.

In regard to submission to the civil power, it should be borne in mind that throughout the whole apostolic age, the dominion of Rome was both universal and imperial—every-where present and every-where absolute, so that the Christian fraternity had never the least responsibility for the wisdom or the equity of the government under which they lived. Moreover, during much of this period they were in more or less peril of civil persecution as hostile to the established state religion. Hence for every reason, implicit, unresisting submission to the civil power was their highest wisdom. This submission must be universal with the one exception that they could not—must not—worship the Roman Emperor, nor the heathen gods of Rome. In all other points they were to be models of good order, shining examples of the blameless citizen—prompt and swift to every good work.——"To speak evil of no man," maliciously—thus taking care to make no personal enemies causelessly—that they might stand in such relations to the ungodly on every side as would give them the fullest access to their heart and conscience. This was to be the great law of their social life.——"No brawlers"—this word in the sense of quarreling and fighting rather than of mere scolding. On the contrary, let them be gentle, forbearing, meek toward all.—— How beautiful is this gospel temper and this Christian life, seen in contrast with human selfishness, untamed by the sweet precepts and spirit of Christ!

3. For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, *and* hating one another.

You will see reason for much forbearance toward provokingly abusive men if you will recall the fact that before ye knew and felt the gospel's power ye were bad as they. Here is the picture of that former godless temper and life—"foolish" [very senseless were we]; unyielding; deceived and erring under the sway of countless delusions; enslaved to various lusts and pleasures; hateful in ourselves and hating one another, so that mutual hatreds and hostilities were the common law of our social life.

4. But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared,

5. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

6. Which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior;

7. That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Such is the picture, with no relief to the dark shadings, until

the kindness and philanthropy [love toward men] of God our Savior broke in upon our dark, selfish souls. Then came a glorious change! This change is assumed so naturally and fully that Paul seems to forget to assert it definitely; but is borne on as if fascinated by the facts and the features of this marvelous manifestation of God's love. This great salvation turned in no respect upon works of righteousness which *we* had done [Paul makes this "*we*" emphatic by writing it in full]. It sprang from a totally different source. It came from God's mercy alone and can be measured only by the amazing depth and vastness of that mercy.——Instrumentally considered, it wrought through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; that is to say, by that purifying of the heart which is wrought by the regenerating, renewing agency of the Holy Ghost. The two correlated figures—the new birth and the renewing, are brought as closely together as the genius of the Greek tongue will admit, and both are attributed to the Holy Ghost—really as co-ordinate figures for the same thing.——In this word "washing" [lutron] which occurs elsewhere only in Eph. 5: 26, there may be an allusion to baptism in the symbolic and spiritual sense, but with no stress upon its merely material nature and power. The less we make of the virtue of mere water to wash sin from the human soul, the better. As a figure, a symbol, it has its use; as a power in itself, not the least imaginable.——This renewing power was shed forth on us abundantly through Jesus, to the end that, being justified, not by works of our own, but by the grace of God only, we might inherit the hope and in due time the reality of eternal life.——In this rapid grouping of the great elements of salvation through Christ, the two salient points are—(*a*) The washing and renewing which saves the soul from sinning and from its condemnation; and (*b*) the being justified, *i. e.*, pardoned and made right in the eye of law.——These two great elements of the gospel scheme are always present in every analysis which Paul makes of the gospel. It is no gospel to him without them both. Men must be justified by faith in Jesus; and equally, they must be washed—purified in heart and made holy through the Holy Ghost.——Reviewing the logical connections of this passage, we notice that, in Paul's showing, men were sunk hoplessly in depravity, malice, hatefulness—continuously, terribly—up to the moment when there flashed forth this revelation of God's compassionate loving kindness. With this revelation, there came a redeeming, restoring power. To this gospel and to this only and alone, have we been indebted for all that has made us to differ from the unwashed heathen.——Such a view of this change occurs not infrequently in Paul's epistles (*e. g.*, 1 Cor. 6: 9–11).

8. *This is* a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.

This is a word to be believed with firmest faith (see 1 Tim. 1: 15). In respect to all these points I wish thee to make them strong by solemn reiteration—that those who have believed in God be zealous with great care to maintain good works—to stand before the world distinguished for well doing. This is the sense (very admirable) of Paul's words.——Such "works are good and profitable unto men"—a blessing to society, and therefore pleasing and honorable to God.——The high place assigned to good works in these epistles to Timothy and to Titus should by no means be overlooked—a prominence in fullest harmony with the genius of Christianity, yet doubtless put here in this strong relief because the vices of the age and the mischievous errors thrust upon those churches by men at once false and foul, made it necessary. As is well said by Ellicott:—"Their religion was not to be a hollow, specious, falsely ascetic and sterile Christianity, but one that showed itself in outward action."

9. But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

The words—"genealogies and strivings about the law"—indicate the Jewish origin of these insipid questions, and questioners as well. The Pharisaism of the time of Christ became only the more foolish, formal, flat—with the lapse of time and with its antagonism against gospel light which its advocates were sinning against. Probably we might also say—became only the more disputatious, hair-splitting, controversial, and utterly valueless.

10. A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject;

11. Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

In view of its bearings, both real and supposed, upon church discipline, this passage should be carefully studied—(*a.*) In its words: (*b.*) In its context, *i. e.*, in the light of the case contemplated.——(*a.*) The word "heretic" occurs in the New Testament here only. But "heresy" in both its singular and plural form occurs several times—the singular in the sense of a sect (Acts 5: 17 and 15: 5 and 24: 5, 14 and 26: 5 and 28: 22). For its plural form see 1 Cor. 11: 19 and Gal. 5: 20 and 2 Peter 2: 1.

The essential idea seems to be that of notions of a man's own choosing; novel opinions with which he has become enamored. But on the nature and amount of his heresy, light should be sought. (*b.*) From the context. Here it seems obvious that this "heretic" is not so much directly assailing and denying some fundamental doctrine of the gospel system as indirectly ruling out all the vital things of the gospel by constructing a gospel scheme of his own out of the sheerest puerilities, genealogies,

hair-splitting controversies over Mosaic law questions, etc., etc. ——Men of this character Titus was to admonish the first and (this failing) the second time. Both having proved unavailing, he is to *shun* those men. "Reject" is somewhat stronger than Paul's word will justify. He is to excuse himself from further association with them. The reason given is that such a man is "subverted"—*i. e.*, perverted in mind; dangerously if not hopelessly given to waywardness, having lost the due balance which unperverted good sense supplies.——"And sinneth"—his wayward notions come to involve real sin because he goes against the light he has or might have, and by resisting, perverts and debases his conscience—a man, self-accused, but not repentant and yielding to the truth.

It seems to me that the light which comes in upon this case from the context is quite vital to a just conception of our passage. Particularly it explains why *shunning* such men is the appropriate treatment. They can not be counted into the goodly fellowship of servants of Christ because they lack the vital elements of Christian character. Their false teaching is, however, to be condemned rather for its negative qualities than its positive. It is not gospel because it is only frivolous, foolish, subtle, powerless for good. The point of its condemnation is not that it labors directly and positively to assail and overthrow the vital truths of the gospel.

12. When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter.

13. Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.

This Nicopolis is probably that of Epirus, lying therefore on his route from Achaia [Corinth] toward Rome. There he purposed (at this writing) to spend the ensuing winter.——Whether this Zenas was a "lawyer" in the Roman or in the Jewish sense is not certain—the latter being much more probable.——Apollos appears several times in the Acts and epistles—a Jew of Alexandria, whose first knowledge of Christianity came through John the Baptist. He was a man of eloquence and mighty in the Old Testament Scriptures. He first came in contact with the more full gospel teaching at Ephesus, in the society of Priscilla and Aquila. So far as is known his gospel labors were in that city and subsequently in Corinth. His relations with Paul seem to have been only pleasant, albeit a party at Corinth seem to have been disposed to gather about him as their favorite man (1 Cor. 3: 4, 5).

14. And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

15. All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

"Let ours"—*i. e.*, our people, the members of our fraternity and church—be careful to be worthily and truly distinguished by their good works, particularly for the necessary purposes of life—supporting themselves by honest industry so as not to burden others. On the contrary, let them be helpful to those who are really in need.

Greet all those who love us *in the faith*—because we are believers in Christ—loving us because of our Christian character and relationships.

THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

INTRODUCTION.

The points germain to an introduction to this short epistle are few, simple, and quite well established.

Philemon was a resident of Colosse, as is shown by that of his servant Onesimus, said by Paul in his letter to the church at Colosse to be "one of you" (Col. 4: 9).

This epistle discloses its own occasion; its antecedents and attendant circumstances. Briefly put, they are these:—Philemon had held Onesimus as his bond-servant. Onesimus made his escape—and his way to Rome, where, under the labors of Paul, he became a convert to Christ. Paul therefore sends him back with this letter to Philemon, relating the facts of his conversion and commending him to the Christian confidence of his former master.——It was written from Rome during Paul's first imprisonment there, nearly at the same time with those to the Colossians and Ephesians (about A. D. 61 or 62).

Among the epistles of Paul this one is entirely unique, unlike any other. It is not addressed to any church, but to one individual; discusses no great doctrinal themes; expatiates not upon Christian morals; aims not to regulate discipline nor to correct erratic tendencies in any church whatever. It is simply a personal, private letter, of the same class with the second and the third epistles of John. How it came to be included in the sacred canon—why this rather than many other private letters which we may presume Paul wrote, we have no data to determine, unless we account the lovely spirit it breathes, the delicate tact it exhibits, and the valuable results in the case of this one household, to be adequate reasons for the honorable place assigned it in the canon.

THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

The customary salutation (v. 1–3); personal gratitude and prayer in view of what he has heard of Philemon (v. 4–7); earnestly commends to him Onesimus, his convert, and begs Philemon to receive him in his personal love to Paul (v. 8–12); whom he might have retained, but would not without Philemon's consent (v. 13, 14); suggests that the Lord's good hand might have brought Onesimus to Rome to be converted, and thus become a Christian brother to his former master (v. 15–17); Paul will make good any wrong this servant may have done his master (v. 18, 19); renews his request, coupled with expressions of confidence that it will be granted (v. 20, 21); suggests his purpose to visit this friend (v. 22), and closes with salutations (v. 23–25).

1. Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy *our* brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow-laborer,

2. And to *our* beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the church in thy house:

3. Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

With exquisite sense of propriety, Paul omits all reference to his apostleship. He is only a "prisoner" in behalf of Christ, writing from his prison-home.—Timothy's name is joined with his as in two other epistles of the same date, viz., Philippians and Colossians.——Philemon is addressed as a fellow-laborer, dearly beloved—terms which suggest not certainly that he was in the pastorate, or held any office in the church, but that he was at least an active and useful lay brother. Apphia is supposably his wife; and Archippus perhaps their son, whom Paul honors with the designation "our fellow-soldier"—*i. e.*, in the army of the Lord.——"The church in thy house" is not in New Testament usage the church of which he was pastor, but the church accustomed to meet for worship in his private residence. Aquila and Priscilla are twice referred to as keeping open house for a worshiping congregation, thus having a church assembly in their own private house (Rom. 16: 5 and 1 Cor. 16: 19).

4. I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers,

5. Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints;

6. That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

7. For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

In v. 5, our English version assumes that "love and faith" bear the same relation ["toward"] both to the Lord Jesus and to all the saints." With much greater precision of thought, Paul uses two somewhat different prepositions—the former having the sense *before*, in the presence of, and generally in respect to; but the latter is one which suggests working toward, bearing effectively upon for good. In v. 6 I understand the object of Paul's prayer to be that the impartation of thy faith may become energetic in the sphere of a true knowledge of every thing good—*i. e.*, by means of diffusing such knowledge.——"Bowels," in the oriental sense—the heart or soul, as the seat of deep affection.

8. Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient,

9. Yet for love's sake I rather beseech *thee*, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

10. I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds:

11. Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me:

12. Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels:

Wherefore, although in my relation to Christ as his apostle, I might assume all boldness to enjoin (command) thee to do what is in itself appropriate (*i. e.*, to receive Onesimus in the spirit of forgiveness and love), yet I choose rather to base my request upon love—the love thou bearest to me; and therefore I simply entreat thee to do for me this favor—for me now aged and also a prisoner for Christ.

In behalf of my son Onesimus [thou surely wilt do me this favor for my *own son!*], who, through my instrumentality while here in bonds, has become my convert to Christ. In v. 11, the words "profitable" and "unprofitable" are a play upon the word Onesimus, which signifies "profitable." Aforetime he was no Onesimus to thee, for he deserted thy service; but now, through his conversion, he has become a real *Onesimus* to me; and if received kindly will be so to thee also. I therefore have sent him

back to thee. Receive him as if he were my own soul, embodying the love of my heart.

13. Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel:

14. But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.

I had occasion for his services in the gospel and was wishing to detain him for this purpose; but, recognizing thy relation to him, I would not do so without thy free consent.

15. For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever;

16. Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?

17. If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.

This "perhaps" seems to look toward the providential purpose of God in the elopement of Onesimus—viz., that he might fall under Paul's influence and be converted, and so become more than his servant, even his Christian brother; and this for more than the years of this transient life—even for ever.

18. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth *thee* ought, put that on mine account;

19. I Paul have written *it* with mine own hand, I will repay *it*: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.

The supposition made here, "wronged thee or oweth thee any thing," is thought to imply that Onesimus might have gone forth from his master's house not empty, but with some supplies for future need—an offense which Philemon might have accounted theft or robbery. To obviate all possible difficulty on this ground between Onesimus and Philemon, Paul generously—perhaps more generously than justly—steps forward with his pledge to pay this supposed claim.——The claim which Paul forbears to press, "that thou owest me in addition thine own self," is supposed to allude to the circumstance that Philemon owed his own conversion to Paul's labors in his behalf.

20. Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord.

21. Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.

Thus Paul implores his friend (shall we say his spiritual son?) Philemon to do this deed of justice as a personal favor, to gratify Paul's deeply yearning heart. But very delicately, he would not

assume that Philemon can object. Rather he has all confidence that he will grant more than all he asks.

Grouping together the salient points of this negotiation with Philemon in behalf of his returning servant Onesimus, the spirit of the aged apostle appears in every point of view most admirable. All the critics, not to say all intelligent readers, are struck with the delicate tact it evinces; with Paul's love for Onesimus; with his very respectful deference to the claims of Philemon, and with the kind words he finds to say of his piety and usefulness.—As to my own personal views, I am drawn to add that while I fully indorse all this approbation of Paul's spirit and tact, I am humiliated and ashamed for our common humanity that a tithe of it all should have been deemed necessary. Paul wrote as a man who almost shrunk from touching this delicate relation of master to servant—as a man profoundly, not to say painfully, impressed with the sensitiveness of masters to whatever bears upon their assumed rights in their human property. Apparently, Paul did hope that Philemon's piety would carry the suit against his cupidity and against his sense of being wronged by his fugitive servant. But we must infer that on every other ground save that of sincere piety, Paul would not have dared to ask such a favor. I judge that Paul's inner soul was sad, not to say outraged, under the necessity for such extreme caution in asking as a boon a thing so manifestly righteous and just. How his views of the *brotherhood* of Onesimus must have rebelled against the claim of property-right, on the part of another Christian brother, in his flesh and bones!

22. But withal prepare me also a lodging; for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you.

23. There salute thee Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus;

24. Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow-laborers.

25. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

Paul hopes to make Philemon a visit at his own home in Colosse—a city which Paul had never yet visited. The visit might put him in a position to adjust, if need should be, the new Christian relationship between the old master and this new-born child of God.——Salutations from the Christian friends and fellow-laborers then at his side—all well-known names—close this epistle.

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JAMES.

INTRODUCTION.

It will introduce us to the intelligent study of this epistle to inquire into the following points:

I. The Author:
II. The Date;
III. The people addressed; who, where; and of what leading characteristics;
IV. The special objects of the Epistle.

I. The Author.

In regard to the author of this epistle, some points can be settled with reasonable certainty; and fortunately, these include all that are specially important. The public life and labors of this James during the entire apostolic age; his prominent position at Jerusalem; the esteem in which he was held there and his controlling influence—all suffice to show how fully his credentials as one of the leading Christian teachers were accredited by both the apostles and the churches. These, it will be seen, are the points of chief importance.

Further back in time, during the period prior to the ascension of our Lord, the attempt to identify and trace this James among the many allusions to persons bearing this name has been found very perplexing, and not a little uncertain.

We first attend to his later history—the matters of special importance.

1. The James of our epistle was not the brother of the Apostle John, the "disciple whom Jesus loved"—sons of Zebedee; for this James suffered martyrdom under Herod Antipas (A. D. 44) as we read Acts 12: 2. Our epistle was written several years later.

2. With reasonable certainty this was the same James

who was prominent during the apostolic age in the church at Jerusalem, to whom Peter requested that his escape from prison (Acts 12: 17) might be immediately reported;—"Go, show these things unto James and to the brethren." He is also the same whose voice and opinion seem to have led the decision of the celebrated Council at Jerusalem (A. D. 50) as we read in Acts 15, when the apostles and elders came together to consider the question of enforcing circumcision upon Gentile converts; where, first "all the multitude kept silence and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul declaring what God had wrought among the Gentiles by them"; and after the recital of this story, James answered, rehearsing the facts of the case and the correspondence of these facts with ancient prophecy, closing with these significant words:—"Wherefore, my sentence is that we trouble not them," etc.; "And it pleased the apostles and elders with the whole church" to indorse his sentence [expressed opinion], and to make up their written decision accordingly. This shows us James in the Jerusalem Council.

We find him again at Jerusalem, prominent before any other man there, in the account of Paul's visit (Acts 21: 18) about A. D. 58: "Paul went in with us unto James, and all the elders were present." There Paul rehearsed to them what God had wrought by his ministry among the Gentiles. They heard it with joyful gratitude and gave him the best advice they could suggest, how to allay the violent prejudices of the many thousand Jewish believers who were intensely zealous of the law.——To this same James, it seems obvious that we must refer the allusions which appear in Paul's letter to the Galatians, viz. (1: 18, 19), "I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord's brother." ——Also 2: 9–12: "When James, Cephas [Peter] and John who seemed to be pillars," etc.—"For before that certain came from James, he [Peter] did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision." This presents James as a leading mind in the church at Jerusalem, and at that time specially zealous on the pending question of circumcising Gentile converts.——All these references to James by Luke in the Acts and by Paul to the Galatians, point very manifestly to the writer of our epistle.

Pushing our inquiry back in time to the persons bearing the name "James" in the gospel history, the subject becomes

complicated and the references perplexing. The main issue lies between (*a*) James, named among "the brethren of the Lord", and (*b*) James, son of Alpheus, named in the group of the twelve chosen disciples.

(*a*) The names of the group defined and known as "the brethren of the Lord" appear in Matt. 13: 55 and Mark 6: 3;—viz., "James, Joses, Simon, Judas", to which references we may add Paul's words in Gal. 1: 19;—"James, the Lord's brother."

These "brethren of the Lord" are spoken of in a general way without their several names in Matt. 12: 46–48 and in its parallel, Mark 3: 31, 32. Also in John 2: 12 and 7: 3, 5 and Acts 1: 14 (where they are broadly distinguished from the apostles), and in 1 Cor. 9: 5. All the allusions to them are quite definite to the point of their being a well-known family, *i. e.*, brothers by at least one common parent, and should therefore be accounted the lineal *brethren* of the Lord unless very strong reasons appear to modify the natural construction.

(*b.*) The group of the twelve disciples are named in Matt. 10: 13, Mark 3: 18, Luke 6: 15, and Acts 1: 13. In all, James is the son of Alpheus; and by Luke twice (in his gospel and in his Acts) Judas or Jude (not Iscariot) is called the brother of James.——In one of these groups we must look for the James who wrote our epistle. Some critics attempt to find him in both groups, assuming that it is the same James throughout; but this seems to me very improbable.

(*a.*) In favor of finding our author in the first named group—among "the brethren of the Lord"—are these considerations:

(1.) That Paul (Gal. 1: 19) calls the James whom he found so prominent at Jerusalem "the Lord's brother."

(2.) That Paul records a special appearance of the Lord to James, soon after his resurrection: "After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles" (1 Cor. 15: 7). This should be considered in its relations to what John has said (John 7: 3, 5) to the effect that then his brethren did not believe on him.

(3.) That neither our author James nor Jude his brother (author of the short epistle) speaks of himself as an apostle, but only as "a servant"—James says: "Of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ;" Jude simply: "Of Christ, and brother of James."

(4.) "The brethren of the Lord" are broadly distinguished from the original twelve in Acts 1: 13, 14, where the eleven (Iscariot no longer with them) are definitely named, and then besides them are "the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and *his brethren*" At this time they were praying men in the Christian brotherhood.

(*b.*) Over against these considerations and in favor of finding our author among the original twelve, are these points:

(1.) It seems natural and almost necessary that a man so prominent in the ministerial and pastoral work should have been one of the twelve. Jesus chose and trained that group of twelve to lead in organizing his gospel kingdom; to hold places of chief prominence and responsibility in the founding and care of the first-formed churches—among which none were greater that this at Jerusalem.

(2.) It has seemed difficult to suppose that our author—the leading pastor, not to say bishop of the Jerusalem church, should have been one of those "brethren of the Lord" who are seen (John 7: 3, 5) not believing in Jesus, but in a skeptical and adverse attitude as to his claims. Indeed no evidence appears of their being converted to faith in Jesus at any point prior to his crucifixion.

(3.) The fact that on the cross Jesus committed his mother to the care of the beloved John, son of Zebedee, passing by those four brethren of his who so clearly appear throughout the gospel history as in the family with his mother, seems to signify that they were not the men to be found, so soon after, at the head of great churches and writing epistles as "servants of Jesus Christ."——But to this it may be replied that grace sometimes makes great and rapid changes in human character, of which Paul was a no less striking example.

These are the leading considerations bearing upon the question—In which of these groups shall we find our author?

It may not be amiss to add that the whole question is rather complicated than cleared by the names of "James and Joses" which appear as sons of a certain Mary, present at the crucifixion. Matthew says (27: 56), "Mary the mother of James and Joses;" Mark (15: 40), Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses;" Luke (24: 10)—"Mary the mother of James." Yet this Mary is clearly distinguished from Mary, the Lord's mother.

The exact relationship of this group of Mary's and "the

brethren of the Lord" is not clearly defined. The frequent recurrence of the same name—no less than five several Jameses being supposed to appear in the gospel history—conduces to the perplexity of this problem.

In view of all the evidence it seems to me reasonably certain that James, the well-known and honored pastor of the church at Jerusalem wrote this epistle. With high probability he was one of "the brethren of the Lord." Yet I would not speak on this latter point with entire confidence, and least of all with the spirit of dogmatism. The subject has grave difficulties and the evidence is not so clear as to put this point beyond question. It is strongly indicated that he was a relative of Jesus, *i. e.*, a brother by one parent or both; a cousin or nephew; or in some other of the possible grades of relationship which the Hebrews might include under the term "brother." A more precise identification will involve doubtful points over which it were of little use to speculate and which may best be left in their predestined uncertainty.

Let it be noticed that this James, whether the son of Alpheus and one of the original twelve, or one of "the four brethren of the Lord," was not, like Paul, a Pharisee; was not brought up at the feet of Gamaliel; was not, through early life, a resident of Jerusalem. He was not therefore by his antecedents a second Paul, but was a man whose early culture and training were had under influences of far other sort. In common with nearly all the twelve he was of Galilee, reared in comparatively humble life, remote from the great religious centers of Judaistic and Pharisaic influence. If we may assume that he was of the group known as "the brethren of the Lord," having his early home under the same roof, around the same table, pursuing the same industrial avocations, under the same parental nurture as Jesus himself,—our conceptions of his early surroundings may become somewhat definite. We may suppose it due to his imbibing the prevalent notions of his Jewish countrymen as to their nation's Messiah that he was so slow to recognize the true mission of Jesus. Whether other influences—of jealousy, selfishness, the more subtle forms of our common human depravity—held him back from heart-conversion till perhaps the great crisis hour of the resurrection, and until, in the fullness of a brother's love, Jesus appeared to him singly, and in the same hour broke his proud heart in contrition and swept away his skepticism, and sealed him

as thenceforward a full and firm disciple of his risen Lord—these points may come short of certainty, yet not of high probability, and are by no means alien from the methods which Jesus has often taken to convert and seal such men as he has occasion to use for great service in his kingdom. ——How soon after his conversion he rose to distinction in the infant church, we can not determine precisely. In New Testament history he comes to view first in Gal. 1: 19, which being supposably three years after Saul's conversion may be dated A. D. 40—ten years later than the scenes of Acts 1 and 2.—Next, he is seen at the date of Peter's release from prison (Acts 12: 17, A. D. 44) four years later than the preceding notice. And next at the Jerusalem council (Acts 15): usually dated A. D. 50.—These dates may suffice to show proximately how soon after entering the Christian life, he came into prominent position among the churches and in the apostolic fraternity.

II. Date.

Critics differ widely upon the date of this epistle, varying from A. D. 45 to A. D. 62. In support of the early date it is argued that if it had been written *after* the great Jerusalem Council, it would have contained some allusion to the decrees of that council—a point which would have weight *if* the subject of circumcising Gentile converts had been touched in this epistle. But as it is not, the argument has no force at all. Why should the author refer to that council in a letter which makes not the remotest allusion to the subject there discussed and acted upon?

In my view the late date has very decisive considerations in its support; viz:

1. The entire silence of the epistle on the question of circumcision. We must account for this silence on one or both of these two grounds:—The decline of interest on this subject in the Jewish mind generally, due to the lapse of time and the expulsive power of new and deeper interests, or the less vigorous beat of the ritualistic pulse in the extremities of the Jewish body politic—the most intense action being at the national heart (Jerusalem); and the least intense, among Jews dispersed far abroad in other lands. It will be remembered that this epistle was addressed to the latter class. But it is highly probable that lapse of time, coupled perhaps with better ideas of Christianity, had, prior to this epistle,

toned down the intense heat of national feeling on this point of circumcision.

2. Emigration and dispersion were not only a continuous but an augmenting stream from the great Pentecost onward to the fall of Jerusalem (A. D. 30–70). The Jerusalem pastor saw his flock melting away and making homes for themselves in remote cities and lands. Especially was this the case during the last score of these years—(A. D. 50–70). Throughout this period, political unrest and frequent scenes of bloody violence in Judea and in Jerusalem drove the better class, especially the Christians, rapidly from their ancestral homes into other countries. Hence the demand for this epistle from the heart of their pastor at the old home was continually gathering strength, so that the later date becomes for this reason more probable than the earlier.

3. "The coming of the Lord," said to be then "drawing nigh" (5: 7, 8) must certainly be or at least must include the destruction of Jerusalem, which even the Jews of the dispersion must feel as a great national calamity, and a sore trial to their faith and patience. This dread event Jesus had located in time within the life of some then living, and hence, near the close of the generation that heard those words from his lips (Matt. 16: 28 and 24: 34). This fixes the date of our epistle with reasonable certainty between A. D. 60 and 65.

III. We look for a moment to the *people* addressed, asking *who* they were; *where;* and their leading characteristics.

The address itself answers thus far; *Jews*, and Jews dispersed abroad, in various lands, not otherwise defined. Peter wrote similarly to Jews living in foreign countries as the word translated "strangers" signifies. He subjoins their localities more definitely, viz., "Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia [Minor] and Bithynia," all of which are provinces north and east of Palestine, spreading over the northern part of the broad district between the waters of the Mediterranean and the Euphrates. The presence of Jews in Galatia is indicated also in Paul's letter to them, for the "Galatians" to whom he wrote were chiefly Jews.

As to their *leading characteristics;* we see in this epistle no trace of the Pharisaic element which is patent in the Jews whom Paul addressed at Rome and in Galatia, viz., the notion of saving merit *in works of law.* This notion became a strong and constant temptation to displace gospel faith and put personal righteousness in its stead.——Yet further, let it be carefully noted; This Pharisaic notion of law-right-

eousness was profoundly, fearfully *ritualistic*. Its righteousness was that of rites and ceremonies—not that of sound morality and intrinsic righteousness. The very righteous Pharisee paid most punctiliously his tithes of mint and anise, but had the least possible thought or care for judgment or mercy—the love of God, or the love of his suffering neighbor. The depravity of his heart found scope in these two directions: pride of his faultless, stainless observance of the Pharisaic law; and utter recklessness of the weightier matters. This amounted to a full license for covetousness, oppression of the poor, and whatever other wicked ways might be congenial to his taste and not offensive to his self-made standard of morality. Against such Pharisaism and its legitimate results Paul reasoned mightily in his epistle to the Romans and also to the Galatians. The Colossians, too, were by no means fully emancipated from bondage to ritualism and its notions of meritorious righteousness.

The Jews to whom James wrote were manifestly swerving from the true gospel in another direction. They abused the doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ *unto a license to sin*. They divorced faith from obedience; the receiving of Christ from essential morality—and so made their Christianity the minister of sin—a system of indulgences. They said: We are to be saved by our faith alone—whether or not it shall "work by love;" whether or not it shall inspire us to living consecration and hearty obedience to the law of Christ. Whereas gospel faith has two essential elements—intellectual belief, and the heart's willing homage and obedience to believed gospel truth; their method of abusing the gospel was to divorce these two elements from each other, and then professedly receive the first, but utterly ignore the second. Obviously this false notion of faith opened the door to any amount of immorality. By it, the true gospel was shorn of its glory; Christian faith was emasculated, dishonored, disgraced. Nothing short of the most emphatic protest and the most powerful setting forth of the fallacy and ruin of such sentiments could meet this faithful pastor's sense of responsibility for the straying members of his early Jerusalem flock.

IV. The *special objects* of this epistle will now be apparent. In general James sought to teach and enforce a pure gospel morality; to plead earnestly for an intrinsic righteousness. Especially he must explode the ruinous mistake of his brethren as to salvation by a sort of faith which

wrought not toward works of obedience, love and uprightness. He must needs testify to them that such faith is in the gospel sense *no faith* at all—is powerless, and therefore only as good as dead; and, of course, altogether unavailing to the point of salvation. It could neither please God now nor insure heaven hereafter.

It is one of the felicities of our incomparable Scriptures that they were written, not all by one author, but variously, by many; not by one, seeing all truth from one sole point of view, but by many, each seeing truth from his own point. There is Paul, converted from Pharisaic thought and life, and now battling mightily against the mischievous errors which half-converted Pharisaic Jews were bringing into the gospel scheme. Of course he had strong words in defense of salvation by faith alone, as distinguished from salvation by means of Pharisaic righteousness in what they chose to call "works of law."

The thought and phrase of James ran in another line entirely. How much or how little he may have met with Pharisaic notions of "works of law," he uses the term "works" in entirely another sense, as if he utterly ignored or even had never known the Pharisaic theory. For certainly "works" with James are not ritualities, but are the righteousness of the heart and of the life; are not begotten of pride, and observed as a sole ground of salvation; but are begotten of faith and wrought by and through the heart's love of believed truth. In other words, with James, "works" are the fruit and therefore the evidence of a true faith.——But over against this, the Pharisaic "works of law" which Paul condemns as no gospel but as really subversive of its great truths and principles, were wholly and only a righteousness of man's own devising, alien from intrinsic right and from the law of gospel love; incompatible with faith in Christ, and therefore fatal to the salvation of the soul.

This viewing of gospel truth from various stand-points conduces greatly to the rounding out of a full-orbed system. It serves to guard against all the various perversions to which the gospel is exposed. Paul had perversions to combat in one direction; James in another. The born Pharisee, coming in contact with the gospel scheme, had his special dangers to encounter, coming in through the notions common in his godless life: the Jew, never a Pharisee, was exposed, like other men, to run gospel faith into Antinomianism, *i. e.*,

to make his faith in Christ a substitute for sound morality and to assume that so he was honoring the gospel and doing God service.——Thus under the wisdom of God in constructing his written revelation by means of the diverse agency of various inspired minds, we have a wonderfully perfect Bible. Truly all Scripture is not only heaven-inspired, but is constructed with such manifold variety that it avails to "make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished" for teaching all truth and for refuting all the multiform phases of error.——It is however only a part, a small part of this epistle that James devotes to his discussion and refutation of Antinomianism. He discusses and enjoins many forms of gospel morality. His epistle goes deeply into the science of ethics. It is rich in the illustration and applications of the Christian, eternal law of love to our neighbor. The details need not be given here. We shall find these the staple points of his epistle.

The great doctrines and teachings of such an epistle are always in order. No generation of our kind has ever lived yet that did not need line upon line in these grand lessons of intrinsic righteousness.

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JAMES.

CHAPTER I.

After the briefest possible introduction of himself to his readers (v. 1) James speaks of trials and of their divinely purposed benefits; the full-orbed development of Christian character, including wisdom in practical life which God gives when it is sought in faith (2–8); life's changes, even when most extreme, should be accepted joyfully (9–12), for God's faithful love is in them and never a purpose to ensnare souls into deeper sin; how temptation works in depraved hearts toward and unto sinning (13–15); but God is the Giver of all good, never the Author of evil (16, 17); through whose good will comes our new birth unto holiness by means of his word of truth (18), which word we should therefore hear with the utmost diligence and jealous avoidance of sin (19–21), obeying and not hearing only (22–25). Pure religion is tested by unselfish help of the helpless and by shunning the world's moral pollutions (26, 27).

1. James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

The introduction has discussed the questions: Who was this James? Also, Who and where were the people whom he wrote?

The word "Greeting" translates a Greek word which, literally taken, bids them rejoice; but in usage is the heart's expression of its hope and prayer that the friends addressed may have cause for joy. Brethren, I wish you all blessings! My soul greets you!

2. My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

3. Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

4. But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

It is vital to a just understanding of this chapter to note that our English words, tempt, temptation, are ambiguous, being used sometimes in a bad sense; sometimes in a good; *i. e.*, sometimes

involving the purpose to ensnare into sin; and sometimes no such purpose at all, but only the purpose of strengthening virtue. Used of man tempting his fellow-man, or of his lusts tempting himself, it often has the former—the bad—sense; but used of God, it has never the bad sense but only the good. This will appear more fully below (v. 13–15).——Here, the "falling into divers temptations" refers to God's ways in providence which bring stern trial upon the Christian's virtue. James exhorts his brethren not to shrink from such trials; not to fear them; but even to "count them all joy"—not that chastening is ever for the moment joyous, or otherwise than grievous; but because afterward it yieldeth the peaceful fruits of righteousness. Let them rejoice, therefore, remembering that God's hand always moves in love and in profound wisdom, purposing with well-ordered endeavor to work out a richer, purer patience—patience in the sense of cheerful, submissive endurance. This Christian patience must needs have time and scope for an all-sided development. It has a great and often complicated work to do in human souls. You will not be likely to know so well as God does how many rough points in your moral constitution may need to be smoothed down; how many perverse elements may need to be rooted out by the vigorous, faithful hand of chastening affliction. But remember; God has the grandest and the best ideal of Christian character, toward which he works evermore. The trials may need to be diversified almost infinitely in order to bring out the complete development of sweet, quiet patience under God's chastening but loving hand. He does not propose to stop short of a noble, full-orbed Christian character. He sets his heart upon this: therefore trust thou his love and wisdom for the best possible methods; and count it your supreme joy to have fallen into the training hand and under the faithful discipline of such a Father.

The reader should not fail to notice that in this argument and exhortation, the underlying assumption is that the high, the really supreme end God has in view with us is—to *make and mold character*, to bring his children onward and upward to the very highest perfection and finish of their moral and spiritual life. Of course it follows that in *our thought* also as well as in his,—in our practical judgment—this should be accounted the supreme end of life. We should never assume to be wiser than God. We ought to accept most thankfully his aim and plan concerning ourselves as the very best possible. Therefore, let us count it all joy when we have the present, conscious proofs that God has us in hand and is pressing on his own purifying work in our moral nature and character. Be it painful to the flesh; be it trying to the spirit; yet how should we hail it with unutterable gladness, for God's hand is shaping and working it all that we may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing. What can be for one moment compared with a fully developed virtuous character—a spirit chastened to all sweetness of submission, to all purity

of purpose, to all love and humility—to the very spirit of heaven brought to maturity under the discipline of earth!——Comparing this result of earthly life with any thing, nay with every thing else, how great it is! We may fail of riches; yet having this, we are rich eternally. Our name may be little known, but God will know it! Many of our cherished plans of life may come to nought; but if the great plan of God for us is realized, shall we not in the coming world rejoice that his wisdom looked further and planned better than ours?

5. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

6. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering: for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

7. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

8. A double-minded man *is* unstable in all his ways.

The cursory reader of this chapter is liable to assume that the subject changes here, making the attainment of *wisdom* a new theme. So doing, he would miss some of the best of the sense, for certainly there is no change of subject here. Our English translation ought to have followed the original in the point of giving the same word for "lack" as in the verse previous for "wanting." This word has suggested the closest connection. "That ye may be perfect, lacking nothing." Yet if any of you should *lack* this one quality of the Christian character—wisdom to bear yourself well in all emergencies; wisdom to do always the right thing rather than the wrong, then ask God for the wisdom you need. Thus wisdom is thought of here as one of the elements of a fully developed Christian character. The writer does not forget what he is talking about, nor has he finished one topic and advanced to another, for we shall notice below (v. 9–12) that his mind is still upon those reverses of fortune—those sudden transitions from riches to poverty, abundance to want, or (reversing the order) from poverty to competence, in which so much of our earthly trial consists.

Wisdom, practically considered, is the shaping of means to ends, devising the best meaures to reach the ends we seek. Emergencies, such as the writer here assumes to be present, make a very special demand for this practical wisdom. Indeed the whole of human life calls for wisdom. Responsible trusts demand it; the control of our own spirit demands it; the regulation of daily conduct, the bearing of ourselves prudently under any and every form of trial, call for wisdom. If therefore any man is conscious of lacking wisdom, what shall he do but ask God for it? Precisely this is the thing to be done. And for his comfort let him know that God giveth it—not alone to some favored sons

of good fortune, but to all; and not in stinted but in liberal measure; and better yet—does not reproach you for your short-coming; does not retort sharply in rebuke of your folly—(ah, but He might!) What a sense of our very great folly he must often have! But He is infinitely tender and forbearing. *He will never upbraid you!*

"And it shall be given him." In the writer's view, there will be no failure of this gift. Nothing can be relied upon more surely. It looks toward that culture of heart and soul upon which God sets his loving paternal heart, and he can not withhold it.

"But let him ask *in faith*," fully assuming the love of his great Father, and his honest purpose to help at every point toward the utmost and best spiritual culture of his yet imperfect children. It would be most cruel to our Father's heart to doubt this! How can He bear such doubting in the bosoms of those for whom he has done so much and whom he has loved so well!——Then think how this doubting soul is tossed up and down as if nothing in the universe were certain! For if we can not trust God's love, what can we ever trust?——The figure here—that of the ocean wave, wind-driven, tempest-tossed, never at rest—is surely very expressive. A soul so full of doubting and distrust of God, should never expect blessings from his hand. The two-minded man—forever vacillating between little faith and great unbelief—will be unstable in every thing.

9. Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted:

10. But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

11. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

The English phrase—"of low degree"—means naturally, of low social standing—which however is manifestly thought of here as a natural result of poverty. The Greek word means *poor*. The sense of humble life socially comes from the sentiments and usages of society.——If God's providences lift this poor man higher, let him rejoice therein. Yet James has his eye specially upon the rich man. He is more likely to fall than the poor to rise. Indeed, the figure which compares him to the blooming flower assumes that his coming down is according to the order of nature. The flower of the grass (especially in that climate) was destined to fade totally and *soon*. The scorching sun smote it but once and it withered! Its beauty perished in an hour. So too shall the rich man fade away in his ways, and his beauty perish.

What is the doctrine here? Apparently this: As in the flower of the field, this early fading comes by natural law and is there-

fore to be always expected, so the rich man's glory fades by a law of God's moral administration, similarly if not even equally swift and sure; for God must seek his spiritual culture and to secure this result, must (usually) bring him low. To save his soul, his riches must be made the sacrifice. Let him therefore rejoice in being made low, for it signifies that God has taken him in hand to save him unto riches better and far more enduring.

12. Blessed *is* the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

This will be the result if only he endures the trial. Plainly, in connection with what immediately precedes, the writer assumes that his rich brother does bow submissively to the reverse of fortune that comes upon him.——Blessed is the man in any sphere who endures the discipline God permits to befall him. "Temptation" is here in the good, not the bad sense; *i. e.*, in the sense of trials which God sends upon his children.——Tried and thereby proved and purified, he shall receive the promised crown of life. Let him hold this promise before his eye as his inspiration to patient, submissive endurance, turning his thought away from the present pain and disappointment and conflict, to the bright reward put before him in God's word of promise.

13. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God can not be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

14. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

15. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

James has seen the working of human nature and knows how to anticipate its thought. Men, sorely tried by providences that seem adverse, are sometimes fearfully tempted thereby to say in their heart—This is too bad; God must know that I can not bear this; Why should he drive me into sin? I must think he intends it!——But pause and think how horrible the thought! how abusive and even blasphemous the implication! For no temptation to do evil can ever reach the heart of God, nor can he possibly tempt any man in the sense of intending this result, or shaping his providences to make men sin. Let this be forever held in your deepest convictions: *God is good and only good!* He has good ends in view and never other than good.

In saying that "God can not be tempted with evil" in the sense of being not temptible into or even toward sin, James does not mean to deny that God is often sorely grieved and tried by abuse from the wicked. He does mean that no such abuse can possibly draw him into sin. In the sense of being ensnared

into sin, he is above temptation. In the same sense of temptation he tempts no man. The trials he brings upon men are never designed or shaped to draw them into sin.

But would ye know the way men are led into sin by temptation? This is it: Man is tempted into sin by being powerfully drawn and driven by his own lusts and so ensnared—(baited like the fishes, the word used here often means). His passions, appetites, his loves of pleasure of some sort, animal or spiritual, of body or of soul, become dangerously excited, and he indulges them to the extent of fearfully ensnaring his soul into sin. The figure used here—lust conceiving and bringing forth sin—is no doubt as nearly perfect for illustration as any physical process can be of things pertaining to mind and involving moral activities. Yet it must always be considered that purely physical law works by no volition; involves no free will and no moral responsibility within its own proper sphere. But on the other hand the action of mind is totally unlike this, for mind-action must involve voluntary choice, the real consent of the will. It is in this action and in this only that sin can lie. *The physical antecedents of sin should always be broadly distinguished from the sin itself.* In the former lie the temptation, but never the real sin. Sin is a thing of mind, not of body—a thing of free choice, not of mere appetite or passion. For the man who denies his appetite and controls his passion in obedience to the law of conscience and of God is in this act not only without sin but may be eminently virtuous.

These distinctions are supremely vital to a just conception of the laws and processes of sinning.

The writer carries his figurative illustration on to its maturity, saying that when sin has ripened to its normal fruitage, it brings forth death. This is evermore the wages of sin, wages earned both under natural law and under the moral administration of God's government. With the constitution, physical and moral, which God has given us, ruin must inevitably follow as the ripened fruit of sin; and at the same time, under God's moral government it must evermore be true that the soul that sinneth shall die under the curse of the law which sin has broken.

16. Do not err, my beloved brethren.

17. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

18. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.

In a point so vital, my brethren, I beg you to make no fundamental mistake. Every good gift comes down from God—every good thing but no evil: no temptation to sin, in the just sense of those words, can be from him. All the energies of his being, all the forces of his universal kingdom, work legitimately to pro-

duce good, not evil; are devised and shaped for the production of good, and for no other purpose.

To put this point clearly, by means of a pertinent illustration:—consider that God is the great Maker and Father of the "lights" in our visible heavens—those great luminaries—sun, moon and stars, which pour upon our world all its light and heat. The record by Moses of the creation uses the same word: "God said, Let there be *lights* in the firmament of the heaven;" and God formed two great *lights;* the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night" (Gen. 1: 14–18). These "lights," however, are variable—the sun varying from winter's distance and feebler warmth to summer's nearness and glowing heat; withdrawn also by night, but returning by day; the moon also waxing and waning; but God, the great Father of these lights, has neither in his gifts nor in the love of his heart, any varying moods; has no changes as from summer's heat to winter's cold, or as from the full-orbed moon to its scarcely visible rim of brightness. No; God's face shines out with never-clouded and never-waning glory. When, after days of cold and storm, the great sun pours abroad his welcome light and heat, we fitly say—*It is so like the face of God;* but God's face never withdraws itself, and in his light there is "no shadow of turning." Perhaps the writer's thought was upon Isa. 60: 19, 20:—"The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself."

Foremost among God's good and perfect gifts is his *regenerating grace,* in which he has begotten us with the word of truth that we might be in a sort the first-fruits of his created things—new-born to him so as to be truly in very deed the sons of the living God. This comes from his *own good will*—is the fruit of his pure and perfect love. No manifestation of God's great love can surpass this. It stands among the best of his great gifts to depraved, lost men.——It may be noticed that the underlying assumption here is the same as in v. 2–6, viz., that God seeks for us the highest and richest blessings possible, and that the very highest possible is a *perfect character*—a soul molded into his own perfect moral image. For this end he gives us the discipline of trial; for this in the outset he gives us the new birth through his Spirit working in and by his word of truth.——It should be carefully noted that this reference to regeneration conceives of it as wrought instrumentally by God's revealed truth, brought to bear with its legitimate power upon intelligent mind. So 1 Pet. 1: 23—"Being born again *by* the word of God."

"First-fruits" are thought of as that which was specially consecrated to God. (See Deut. 18: 4 and 26: 10, Prov. 3: 9, Jer. 2: 3, etc., etc). Therefore the phrase well represents the soul, new-born in regeneration; for no element, no characteristic in this renewed soul, is so distinctive as real consecration to God. How

spontaneously does the new-born child give himself to his divine Father in love and labor; in the full affection of his soul and the warm service of his life.

19. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

20. For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

It is interesting to trace the course of thought running through this passage and to note carefully how reasonable it is that we should be thoughtful hearers of God's word of truth inasmuch as regeneration comes to men through that word. Since God begets man in the new birth "with the word of truth," let us indeed be "swift to hear;" eager, hungry to drink it in and draw out of it its utmost life-renewing power.——In the improved text, however, we read—not "Wherefore;" but *know ye this;* take special note of the importance of hearing with the utmost attention and readiness. The word "*know*" calls our thought to the point, while it by no means breaks the closely logical connection with the agency of the word of truth in regeneration but fully assumes it and builds upon it.

The reason why James turns from hearing to speaking, exhorting them to be swift to hear but slow to speak, and especially slow to get excited in angry discussion, is found with no great difficulty in human nature; and very probably was manifested but too often among the Jews to whom he wrote. We may remember that Paul (Rom. 2: 17–21) touches this as a national trait: "Behold, thou art called a Jew, . . and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish . . who hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. Thou, therefore, who teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?" etc.——To be "swift to hear" is humble, teachable; it opens the heart to all the good influences of truth; but to be "swift to speak" and swift to get heated in discussion, comes most often of pride—of thinking more highly of one's self than is well. Such wrath of man by no means works out naturally the righteousness which is of God and which pleases him. Such a talker (Bunyan would call him "Mr. Talkative") is very sure to miss all the good influences of divine truth on his own soul, and especially if he naturally goes into undue excitement, because his many words interest others less than himself. He not only fails of all the good of docile hearing, but makes what should bless, a blighting curse to his character.

21. Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

"Filthiness" should not carry our thought to what defiles flesh, but rather to that which fouls the soul, the real character. In a

quiet way James would suggest that Mr. Talkative makes himself very disgusting; that his indulgence of a loose tongue and touchy temper makes him very offensive to people of pure taste—much as filthiness of flesh gives offense to people of cleanly habits. The phrase "superfluity of naughtiness" should by no means have such emphasis on the word "superfluity" as to imply that the word condemns only the excess, while it could tolerate naughtiness in moderate amount. Not this; but rather that *all* "naughtiness" is too much; all bad temper, all pride, all self-seeking, is to be laid aside most jealously. Any degree of naughtiness is superfluous. Even the least of it is too much. Therefore receive with meekness (the opposite of pride, captiousness, and vain disputation) the word which the Spirit of God would fain engraft into your heart, that it may work out its legitimate influence in the salvation of your soul. The word of truth, being given us of God and impressed by his Spirit for the very purpose of counter-working sin and saving our souls unto holiness and heaven, how should we bend our ear to hear it and our heart to make it welcome!

22. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

23. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

24. For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

25. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

Another danger to be apprehended and guarded against calls for yet another word of warning. There was the danger of hearing and not doing, of learning their duty but doing it not; perhaps even accounting it a merit to hear, yet no sin to neglect the doing. Therefore, let them receive the admonition—that they be not only swift to hear rather than swift to speak, but also prompt to *do* as well as to *hear*. To be a hearer and yet not a doer would be a sad—nay, more, a fatal shortcoming. For all divinely revealed truth is *unto goodness*. It comes from God for the very purpose of making man's heart and life better; not to amuse his fancy; not merely to stir his thought-power; not alone to gratify his taste for knowledge; but high above all these or any other purposes, it comes from God and it aims to secure a better character. It asks an obedient heart. It reveals something to be done. It looks toward duty. Therefore the man who ends with hearing and always stops short of doing deceives himself if he supposes that he does justice in the least degree to God's revealed truth or to the wants of his moral nature. Let him not think that by merely hearing the truth he honors and pleases God. On the contrary, if he hears only and obeys not, he wrongs his own soul, abuses his

conscience, withers and dwarfs his spiritual growth. To illustrate his case James compares it to a man's seeing the face he was born with in a mirror; he just catches a look, passes on, and forthwith forgets what he saw. He receives no abiding impression and gains not the least practical result from his seeing. The better and true way is then described. He "looks into the perfect law of liberty,"—bending over it, the word signifies—fixing his eye intently, earnestly, upon the truth seen there that he may take in its full sense and power. "The law of liberty" (be it noticed carefully) is not a law of license; is not a law which you are at liberty to heed or not heed as you will; is not a law which merely suggests advice, never rising to authority, never enforced by sanctions; but far otherwise. It is a law which aims to break the chains of sin and set you free from its bondage; a law whose mission is deliverance from Satan and his enslavement, redemption from the tyranny of lust. It looks toward the freedom with which God makes his children free—the freedom of a sanctified will, brought into harmony with the will of God which is infinite reason. In true obedience to this will, there is never the least sense of bondage. All obedience of this sort is sweet and joyous, for it satisfies our noblest, highest convictions of right and duty, and causes the soul to rest in perfect peace. He therefore who looks intently, deeply into this perfect law, given us to free the soul from sin, and who continues in this law, being not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work which God's revealed truth enjoins, is blessed in this doing; not (be it noticed) in his *hearing* merely, but in his real *doing*—in the obedience he renders to the perceived claims of divine truth. So Jesus himself taught: "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him;" "My Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." (John 14: 21, 23.) Is not this result always supremely blessed?

I am aware that a very different sense has been put by some upon the phrase—"The perfect law of liberty;" viz., that its liberty is the absence of rule, precept, definite requirement, leaving the subject free to guide himself by the impulses of love only —"*do what you love to do*," being the general direction. With this omission of specific rule another feature is sometimes combined—viz., that love can not work under rule; therefore must of necessity be free to make its own law, inasmuch as obedience to specific law is of course rendered only in and through fear, and never from real love.

These glosses upon the "perfect law of liberty" are sometimes put in a very specious, attractive way; yet I can not excuse myself from saying—They tread on dangerous ground and are essentially fallacious. For, definite rules of moral conduct, such as God gives in his moral law, are in their essence an unmixed blessing. I thank him for every such rule. It relieves me to know precisely what moral conduct towards both God and man will

please God. I love to see the heart of God in every one of these rules. I find a deep and restful joy in cultivating a careful conscientiousness in obeying every rule in its true spirit, as a testimony to the love I bear to the Great and Good Lawgiver and to my earnest purpose to please him in all things.——Then as to the other idea—that obedience to clearly defined moral precepts is the slavery of fear and not the freedom of love, the very position itself is false and fallacious. For, love has its best scope and most glorious range when it accepts God's law as the expression of his will, and renders obedience to it out of the depths of a loving soul. God is a great Lawgiver and King. No richer joy ever wells up in the souls of his children than that which recognizes and adores him as such, and yields him the homage of the utmost obedience to all his revealed will.

26. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion *is* vain.

27. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world.

The words "religious" and "religion" as used here put in the foreground the idea of *worship*, and we may say, the worship of *ritualism*. The man thought of is religious in the sense of making great account of the forms of religious worship. So doing, he may *seem* to be a true worshiper of God. But if he bridles not his tongue but deceives his own heart with the presumption that he is very religious, and specially acceptable to God, all his religion is vanity—hollow, futile, worthless. It is an abomination to God, and only a sham, an emptiness in the eyes of discerning men.

Let the better, the true idea of what pure religion is, be considered. Here he gives it. "To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction" is not to go to see them merely to intrude upon their secret sorrows, and pry into their untold griefs; and by no means is its aim to get for yourself the honor before men of being sympathetic or generous; no; but to minister unostentatiously to human suffering and want. To this James subjoins:—To "keep himself unspotted from the world"—above its pollutions; unstained by its spirit of vain show, "the lust of the eye and the pride of life."

There is special pertinence in saying—The religion that is "undefiled before God *even the Father* is this." He does not say—before God, the Almighty; nor God, the All-wise; nor God, the Omniscient; but God the real *Father*. For He will delight in those who have such sympathy as he himself has with his own suffering children. The great and good Father will love to see you visiting the fatherless ones in this world of sorrow.

It may be noticed also that this test of pure as distinguished

from spurious religion is the very same which Jesus proposes to apply at the final judgment: "I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; sick, and ye visited me. Inasmuch as ye have done these things unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25: 35–40).

It is doubtless sadly true that alms-giving may be made a formality or an hypocrisy; and so may become as offensive to God as any other forms and hypocrisies. But such abuses can not vitiate the rule. Like all other tests of character, this is to be applied *to the heart;* by man, as to his fellows or himself, as faithfully and honestly as he can: by God, to all his creatures with infinite honesty and never-failing certainty.

CHAPTER II.

Respect of persons forbidden (v. 1); illustrated as seen in worshiping assemblies (v. 2–4); shown to be utterly unlike God's preference as between the rich and the poor (v. 5); and also unreasonable, judged of by the character of the rich (v. 6, 7), or by the royal law of God (v. 8, 9). Sin lies in violating the spirit rather than the letter of the law (v. 10, 11). "The law of liberty" and what it signifies and implies (v. 12, 13). The mutual relations of faith and works discussed; illustrated in the case of mere professions of benevolence (v. 14–17); by a supposed case of faith with no works resulting (v. 18, 19); by the case of Abraham and Isaac (v. 20–24); and of Rahab (v. 25); and finally compared to a body from which the soul has gone (v. 26).

1. My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of persons.

"Respect of persons" means estimating and treating men according to their external circumstances, their outward appendages —and not their intrinsic character. It is regard for the outward, the person—and not the inward—the real soul and its qualities. ——The apostle would never admit this principle or rule of treatment into Christianity. Let it have no place in the usages, or even the opinions and social estimates which obtain among the followers of Christ.——It was very pertinent and forcible for him to speak of "the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord of glory.*" Let them remember that their Jesus had infinite glory with the Father before he came to our world; and that, though rich above all human thought, yet for our sakes he became

utterly poor, having "not where to lay his head." Would they apply the principle of respect of persons to him and disown him for his abject poverty? Would not this be unutterably horrible? The poverty side of his human life would be inevitably suggested by this allusion to his anterior glory with the Father. It needed but this one word—"the Lord of glory"—to remind them of that sublime self-sacrifice which brought him down to the lowest of the poor in the sphere of his earthly estate.

2. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;

3. And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:

4. Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

"Unto your assembly" (Greek, synagogue), your place of religious worship.——A gold-ringed man. Even the choice of the word for man (ανηρ) suggests one who would be held above the common rank.—"In shining apparel"—making a fine display.—Also a poor man in sordid raiment, cheap, unadorned; but not necessarily filthy.——You pay your special respect to the man of gay clothing.——"Sit here honorably" (Greek): while to the poor man ye say—Stand there, anywhere; no matter whether you find any seat; or take one here under my footstool. In this, do ye not make discriminations among yourselves, and on grounds that are unreal and vicious? Do ye not become evil-thinking judges—judges who pass their verdict upon utterly false principles? The Greek words mean, not that they passed a judgment *concerning* evil thoughts, either their own or others; but that they judged of men upon false grounds, making their estimate and forming their opinions upon considerations utterly unworthy of Christian men.

5. Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

6. But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment-seats?

7. Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?

Does God act on such principles as these of yours? Does He discriminate against the poor and choose rich men as his favorites, to be the recipients of his chief blessings? Nay, brethren; ye know it to be far otherwise. Usually he chooses the poor of this world to become rich in faith and heirs of his kingdom—to

become rich eternally in the wealth of heaven. In despising the poor as ye are doing, ye take the very opposite course, and act on principles the reverse of God's. Is it in your thought to rebuke even the great God by discarding his policy, and thrusting your own into his face—in his own house—in contrast with his?

Consider, also, how the rich have treated you, as Christians; how they have oppressed you and dragged you before their courts in persecution. Think also how they have dishonored the glorious name called upon you in your baptism and given you as your distinctive name before men. Is it not passing strange that ye should exhaust the partialities of your esteem and favor upon rich men, fascinated by their vain display of wealth and fawning at their feet to gain some consideration from their ungodly hands?

8. If ye fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well:

9. But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

In v. 8 the first Greek word (mentoi) suggests a concise restatement of the principles involved; as if he would say;—or put it thus: Apply to it the royal law—that kingly, grand, all-comprehensive and perfect rule—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Obey this, and you are all right. But this law makes the poor man your neighbor as truly as the rich, and binds you to love him as you love yourself. This, you will observe, would not put him under your footstool when he comes into your Christian assembly! Having "respect of persons" is a palpable and grievous violation of this royal law. The fact that you treat men so, viewed in the light of this law, convicts you of being transgressors.

10. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all.

11. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

Suppose you obey the law in every other respect save this, yet even then, breaking it in this one point, you really break the law. You are held obnoxious to its penalty as a transgressor. This is precisely the sense of the Greek word rendered guilty (ενοχος); Ye are *held under* the entire and full condemnation of this law as really and truly as if ye had broken all its precepts. For in a most vital sense, the law of God is a unit; and breaking any one precept is breaking the law. Breaking any one precept involves the *spirit* of disobedience—the heart of rebellion against God, and therefore all the real sin there is or can be in violating God's law.

The writer makes his meaning plain, and if need be yet more certain by his supposed case (v. 11):—For he, the same God, who

said—Do not commit adultery, said also, "Do not kill." Now suppose ye have not committed adultery, yet if ye have killed your neighbor, it is murder none the less because ye are guiltless of adultery. It is not necessary that ye break every precept of the decalogue in order to make your deed of murder a sin. The violation of a single precept—any one ye may choose or chance to violate—makes you a transgressor of the whole law. Ye will therefore apply this principle to your sin in having respect of persons.

12. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

13. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

Remember that ye are to be judged by "the law of liberty." The reader will recall the previous reference to "the perfect law of liberty" (1 : 25), and may refer to explanatory remarks made there. Both there and here it is most palpable on the face of it that this "law of liberty" can not be a *law of license*—a law which has no binding precept, no "grip." On the contrary, it is a law which cuts up sin by its roots, which strikes at the core—the very spirit itself of transgression, and seeks to exterminate it utterly from the heart so that not even a fiber shall remain. It aims at nothing short of setting man's heart *free* from all sin so that he shall be at liberty from its soul-bondage.——For he who shows no mercy to others shall have merciless judgment passed on himself. It is only the merciful man who can rejoice against judgment—safe from its terrible condemnation.——In this clause there can be no doubt that the abstract, "mercy," stands for the concrete—the *man of mercy;* he whose spirit and heart represent mercy. He only is safe and may be joyful against God's judgments.——That the man who shows no mercy to his fellow shall himself find no mercy with God, is the doctrine so often reiterated by our Lord: "Forgive ye men their trespasses that your Father may forgive you yours. For if ye do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive you" (Mark 11 : 25, 26 and Matt. 6 : 14, 15 and elsewhere).

14. What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

15. If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

16. And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be *ye* warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit?

17. Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

Here opens a special discussion upon *faith and works*, as to their mutual relations and values, separate or combined. The passage has been sometimes sharply criticised, and has been to some a stone of stumbling because thought to be in collision with Paul's doctrine of justification by faith alone. Even the good Martin Luther read James with a vail over his eyes, and indulged himself in denouncing this passage and indeed in discarding the whole epistle because he did not like this passage with his construction of it. But the passage reads admirably when the vail is removed.

In the outset, note the connection of this discussion of faith and works with the context. His brethren held their faith as to the Lord Jesus Christ along with respect of persons, (see v. 1). They professed faith in Christ; yet their works in despising the poor for their poverty and flattering the rich despite their wickedness, really gave the lie to their faith. To say the least, this sin of theirs was not at all to the credit and the honor of their faith in "the Lord of glory." James therefore proposes to them to look into this matter. They need to see that faith calls for better works than such; indeed, that faith and such works do not fit well together; that faith without better works than those is only as good as dead. Hence this discussion.

He begins with the question whether faith with no corresponding works brings any profit. Is it good for any thing? Can it really *save?* Put it to the test in the point of relief for the hungry and the naked. Suppose you have naked and hungry ones in the brotherhood of your church, and you say to them—I love you very much; I wish you well with all my heart; "be ye warmed and be ye filled"; warm clothes and good food are fine things to have; how I wish you had them!—but you give them nothing: what does your faith and your Christianity—all your warm words amount to? How much does it all profit those needy, suffering men and women, or even yourself? Are they at all the less cold and the less hungry? Do your empty words warm those freezing limbs, or fill those hungry mouths?——So faith, having no corresponding works, *i. e.*, if alone and fruitless, is simply dead.

This illustrative case, the reader will notice, shows that James has no confidence in such faith as that. The faith he thinks of is empty and dead. The fact that it bears no legitimate fruit proves it to be spurious. He looks for fruit; then he may believe it to be living and not dead.

18. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have words: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

19. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

The Greek words translated—"Yea, a man may say"—may be rendered somewhat more closely—"*But* some may (or will) say." The question of interpretation is whether James puts these words

in the mouth of a supposed objector, or gives them as his own—expressing his own views of the case. The latter is the better view; for plainly this supposition presents his own ideas. The case (he holds) is such that one man might properly say to another;—"Thou hast faith"; thou makest the utmost possible account of naked faith; I have works, and I think them entirely vital. Now show me thy faith without works (the better text omits the word "*thy*")—and I will show thee my faith by means of works.——This putting of the case shows that James never thinks of works with no faith behind them; but rather of works as begotten of real faith in Christ and in his truth. These works he would rely on to set forth and verify his faith. Being the natural fruit of true faith, they are the best possible evidence of its genuineness—of its actual presence and vital power.——Still he pushes his argument:—"Thou believest there is one God"; thou doest well; so far all is right:—but mark: the devils believe all that; and they also show that their faith is real—*they* "*tremble*" before him. But observe: their faith never works by love; never purifies the heart; never passes into sweet submission, resignation, confidence. Hence you will see that faith may end with mere belief of the intelligence and may utterly fail to bring the free will and the voluntary affections into harmony with its legitimate demands. This is a valid—indeed, a most momentous distinction, never to be forgotten—never to be left out of account.

20. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

21. Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

22. Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

23. And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; and he was called the friend of God.

24. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

"Wilt thou know"—wouldest thou have a case in point that will settle this whole question and prove that faith without works is inoperative, worthless? We have the case in Abraham.——"O vain man"—mistaken man; literally, empty man, empty in the sense of not having the truth.——"Is *dead*"—but the improved text gives not "nekra" (dead), but argē, equivalent to aergē—inactive, a thing that has no working, energizing force in it.——Was not Abraham, our father, justified by works, in as much as he offered, or in having offered—his son upon the altar? Thou seest (this not interrogative but affirmative)—thou seest that his faith wrought in and with his works; it put energy into his works; it led him to do that marvelous deed; and by that deed, his faith was made perfect—it reached its full development.

Thus that Scripture was fulfilled which saith—"Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness" (Gen. 15: 6).

Did James fail to notice that the Scripture he quotes says nothing about works, but speaks only of his faith, and seems to make every thing turn upon his "believing God?" No; we can not suppose for a moment that this fact escaped his eye. But the works (he would say) were really there none the less; the works were the very thing which the history of the scene in Genesis makes most prominent—his going steadily forward to offer up that only son upon the altar, never wincing, never faltering, never complaining or questioning—until the deed was virtually done! There it was, a glorious case of blended faith and works—faith energizing work—putting all its vital force into the real doing of that stern and fearfully testing deed! James was under no mistake in finding works there—works, however, not superseding faith, not absorbing all the merit of the act and putting the case upon the footing of good desert as if he had wrought something meritorious; but works, the fruit of genuine faith, and acceptable to God simply because they testify with evidence so overwhelming that he did truly, fully, perfectly, *believe in God.* In this sense he was justified by works and not by faith only—*i. e.*, not by faith which produced no corresponding works.

25. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent *them* out another way?

26. For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

The case of Rahab is analogous. The writer to the Hebrews names her as one of the heroines of faith (11: 31); but James seizes upon her history to show that her faith also revealed itself in works and proved itself genuine by the circumstance that she exposed her life to befriend the men whom she believed to have been sent of God to her door. Thus (James would say) we reach the conclusion that faith without works, like a body without its soul, is simply dead. We know it to be dead because it is powerless. It does nothing, moves nothing. In its real nature, nothing is so energetic, so full of vital force, as faith in the great truths of God, faith in the divine-human person of Jesus as our own perfect Redeemer. Therefore if a man's professed faith has no vital force in it; if it puts no force into him, moves him never to do any thing in obedience and love to Jesus Christ, then we know his professed faith is not what the living soul is to the human body. It is nothing but a body having no soul within.

It would be unpardonable to leave this passage without more special attention to the oft-alleged discrepancy between Paul and James on this question of faith and works.——We begin with placing their respective staple texts side by side.

Paul:—"We conclude that a man is justified without the deeds of the law" (Rom. 3: 28).

James:—"Ye see, then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (2: 24).

Now these passages at their face, would surely seem to show that James has another gospel from that of Paul, a gospel in which salvation rests on quite different grounds. Among conditions of salvation, James rules works in; Paul rules them out. On the point of faith without works, James denies; Paul affirms. This would seem to be a square, flat contradiction. But it is no real contradiction whatever. They use their terms in different senses; that is all. Paul aims to refute one error; James another. Paul gives battle against Pharisaism; James against Antinomianism. Paul decries works, considered as a meritorious ground of salvation; James seems never to think of works in that light, but only as the legitimate fruit and therefore evidence of true faith. With Paul, faith in Christ is so comprehensive that it takes in the loving, obedient heart and life—as real faith always should and always must; while with James, faith considered as not bringing forth works is nothing better, nothing more than a professed intellectual belief, and leaves out the homage which the heart gives to believed truth—the obedience of heart and life to the legitimate demands of truth believed. ——Thus Paul and James differ radically in their respective conceptions of faith.

Not less but perhaps even more do they differ in their usage of the term "*works*." The "works" which Paul thinks of and so sharply rules out of the pale of conditions of salvation are mere Pharisaic works of righteousness; ritualities and ceremonies which were never the fruit of true faith in Christ—which, indeed, were directly antagonistic to such faith, being put by the Pharisees in the place and stead of gospel faith as the meritorious ground of salvation. No wonder Paul comes down upon such works with all the combined power of Scripture, of logic, and of intense denunciation.

Over against this, James has not the remotest thought of those Pharisaic works. The works which he esteems so highly and holds to be so vital to salvation are the fruit of gospel faith—are that intrinsic righteousness which both law and gospel demand—the resulting product of real faith inspiring love to God; cordial, earnest obedience; all the sweet moralities of the Christian life.

It may seem strange to us that two apostles who had certainly met, and we must presume had communed together more or less on the great themes of the gospel; who, moreover, were taught by one and the same Divine Spirit, should use terms in senses so diverse, and make statements which on their face would seem quite irreconcilable. But we should bear in mind that the Divine Spirit is not responsible for their usage of words; that their usage was formed and shaped under diverse circumstances; that

their opportunities for free comparison of views and for their sense of standard terms were limited; that one had passed his early life among Pharisees and the other had not; that one had found his great mission in contending against the errors of Pharisaism, while the other had equally found his in contending against Antinomianism; that they had each a mission of most vital importance and each was standing up intelligently and firmly in defense of those aspects of truth which he found assailed and against those errors which were right under his eye and hand. This is just what good men ought to do.

Such apparent yet not real discrepancies between two great apostles should admonish us to read the Scriptures with our eyes open to the circumstances and aims of each individual writer in each distinct epistle, and even in each chapter and passage. Every one of these inspired writers assumed, and had a right to assume, that his readers would give attention enough to consider what, under the circumstances, his words should mean; to think what he was writing about; to whom he was writing; what errors he was opposing; what truths he was teaching and for what purpose. Writers always assume that their readers must bear the responsibility of at least so much thought, as the price of understanding what is written.

CHAPTER III.

A new and special line of thought runs through this chapter—*the use and abuse of the tongue.* Yet the reader will notice that this discussion is by no means superficial; does not limit itself to the external symptoms, but carries us behind the symptoms to the very malady itself—the heart of man out of which bad words flow.——Moreover, observe that this fresh line of thought does not start from the point of gossip and foolish talk in general, but from the abuse of speech which was developing itself among his Jewish brethren who were or wished to be religious teachers. Evidently there must have been an undue ambition to press into the sacred office. We may probably account for it as an outgrowth of the honor accorded in their early history to prophets and to priests, and later, to the scribes and lawyers who sat in Moses' seat. One of the naturally resulting evils of such unhallowed ambition would appear in the too free use of the tongue. Men of such ambition must of course seek to rise by seeming to know more than others; not only more than the masses but more than their competitors in this office. In such a social atmosphere, there would inevitably be envy; jealousy of rival claimants; bad

temper; harsh words; a spirit of severe criticism; the assumption of superiority, and a sad absence of gentleness, humility, the esteeming of others above one's self, and the sweet charities of the humble, loving spirit. The presence of such mischiefs among the professed leaders of the people called forth this faithful, stinging rebuke of the ungoverned tongue.

Hence the apostle opens this chapter with an admonition against pressing promiscuously and in too great numbers, into the gospel ministry (v. 1); suggesting that we all have many shortcomings, and that the man who never offends in word must be a finished, complete character, and able to govern every appetite and impulse of his nature (v. 2); that as bits to a horse's mouth and the helm to a ship in storm, so the tongue in man is a controlling power (v. 3, 4); its desolating influence may be compared to a fire of which a very little suffices to kindle a terrific conflagration (v. 5, 6); or the tongue may be thought of as a wild beast needing to be tamed for the safe and profitable service of man, but a tougher case than any thing else in nature (v. 7, 8); put to strangely unlike uses, a thing lawless, capricious, reasonless; now blessing, and now cursing (v. 9, 10); seeming to set at nought all the analogies of the material world (v. 11, 12). If men have wisdom, let them use it in controlling the tongue, and let not envious and proud men glory in their shame (v. 13–16). The wisdom from above defined and commended (v. 17, 18).

1. My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we who are such must pass a sterner ordeal, a severer judgment, inasmuch as we bear more grave and fearful responsibilities.—— The word "master" is here in the old sense, *teacher* as in the compound word, "school-master"—the reference being to the office of religious teacher. We can not suppose the apostle to mean that religious teaching is necessarily a sin deserving condemnation, so that all who enter the sacred office become thereby obnoxious to severe judgments from God. If this were his view, he ought to have warned *all* men against it, and not merely the many. Our good sense must interpret his meaning as above, viz., that the office involved weighty and solemn responsibilities, such as should quench at once the unhallowed aspirations of men ambitious for the honors it might confer.

2. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same *is* a perfect man, *and* able also to bridle the whole body.

"Offend" is here in the sense of coming short of perfect duty; by no means in the sense merely of giving offense by displeasing other people. Strictly its primary meaning is, to trip, stumble, as opposed to safe and good walking. This remark is in place

here to suggest the peril of failing under the great and fearful responsibility of the religious instructor whose words have such momentous bearings and should be ordered, therefore, with consummate wisdom and care. The man who controls his tongue so well as never to trip with even an unfit, ill-timed, or unkind word may be set down as a perfect man, able to control every other organ of his body. James thinks of the mouth and its speech as the chief outlet for the weaknesses and follies of vain thought, and for the ebullition of the heart's bad passions.

3. Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.
4. Behold also the ships, which though *they be* so great, and *are* driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.
5. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things.

In the beginning of v. 3, the better textual authorities give—not "behold;" but *now if*—implying that we do, and the results are as indicated. But no special improvement is made in the sense by this correction.——Bit and curb to the horses' mouth, helm to the mighty ship, are admirable figures to illustrate the wholesome and efficient control which even a small and insignificant agent may exert—in this case, the human tongue upon foolish thought and a bad heart. The point made by the analogy would seem to be the controlling power of this small member, the tongue, over the passions and follies of the soul. Govern your tongue; this will help you exceedingly toward governing yourself. Use it as men use bit and curb for the horse, or as the pilot does the helm for his vessel, and you wield a mighty power over the human heart. As put by the apostle, the point is—The tongue is small, but it takes on airs and assumes high prerogatives. If lawless and unrestrained, it wields a terrible power for mischief.

5. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!
6. And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

In the last clause of v. 5 the textual authorities vary. Instead of a "little fire," Tischendorf has it—"How great a fire! How much fuel the tongue kindleth! A fire, a world of iniquity—the tongue is set among the members, both defiling the whole body, firing up the course [or order] of nature, and itself set on fire of hell." The illustration breathes a terrible energy; the tongue like a fire, of which a spark only will suffice to fire a city and bury it in the ruins of terrific conflagration! So is the tongue to the passions of men, whether of body or of soul. Indulged in lawless

speech, it fires up those passions, stimulates them into fiercer excitement even as fire feeds on what it consumes and takes on terrific energy. It sets on fire the mass of combustible fuel in the human soul—emotions, feelings, passions—enkindling them to fiercer heat, and is itself fired up as it were by the very flames of hell. The bad spirits of the pit find congenial service in inflaming the already burning passions of the human soul which the tongue is here supposed to have defiled and set on fire.

The philosophical fact underlying this illustration deserves careful attention—viz., that giving utterance to thought and feeling with the tongue intensifies the mind's excitement, while the suppression of such utterance helps to allay excitement, and consequently promotes self-control. We may see this law of our nature exemplified in all human life. It reads us a lesson on the means and agencies of self-control, which can not be too thoroughly learned or too assiduously wrought into practice. Those who vigilantly govern the tongue find it comparatively easy to govern the temper and the passions that lie back of it and are demanding expression through its agency.

7. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:

8. But the tongue can no man tame; *it is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

We may excuse ourselves from the task of either proving or disproving the absolute universality of the fact here put, as to taming *all* known animals. The assertion was intended to be general only. For the purposes of the writer, the question of strict universality is of no consequence. The tongue, he means to say, is a stubborn case, not easily brought under man's control. ——For the word rendered "unruly," some manuscripts give [akatasketon] irrepressible, uncontrollable; while others (the better authorities) have the somewhat milder term [akatastaton] unstable, that can not be kept in its place and in order.——"Full of death-bearing poison" introduces still another figure—that of poisonous venom for ever flowing out, for mischief and death.

Before we leave this passage (v. 2–8) which treats of the tongue, it may not be amiss to inquire more closely whether James thinks of the tongue as a *social* mischief, pernicious to society, or as a mischief personal to one's self, exciting bad passions to a fiercer heat. My notes thus far have assumed the latter to be the leading conception. This view is supported by the turn of thought in the outset—viz., that the man who never trips in his words is a well-balanced, soundly built character, *able to bridle the whole body*. He does not say a man gifted to bless society; but a man mighty for *self-control*. So also his illustrations—bit and curb for the horse; helm and rudder for the ship—are instruments for self-government. He means by them to show that the tongue is a power which the man himself must use in self-culture and self-

control. When he compares the tongue to a fire, it is a fire working inward upon the other members and passions of the man himself, and not upon society without. When he comes to think of the tongue as a wild beast to be tamed lest it discharge its deadly poison in cursings of men, he begins to contemplate its social relations, its dangerous power and mischief upon society.——We need not suppose that the writer ever forgets altogether that man is a social being, always in social relations, so that his tongue may work mischief to mankind outside of himself; but the leading thought through these verses is of the reactionary influence of the tongue upon a man's own soul—his own impulses and passions.

9. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

10. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

With the same tongue we bless the Lord (so the better text), even the Father, and curse men made in his image; out of the same mouth both blessings and cursings! Strange! Unaccountable! With powers which ally him to the angels, why should he make himself a fiend? When with tongue and voice he might bless the Lord in sympathy with all the holy, in noblest songs of praise, alas that he should desecrate his mouth to cursings like the demons of the pit! Well might James say: "My brethren, these things ought not so to be!"

11. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet *water* and bitter?

12. Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so *can* no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

The realm of material nature is never so inconsistent, never so perverts itself. Does a fountain ever send forth at the same fissure, the same rock-clift, both the sweet and the bitter?——In the last clause of v. 12, the older manuscripts have it thus: "Neither can salt water yield fresh."

13. Who *is* a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

14. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

Ye would be thought wise and intelligent, even above your fellows. If so, be careful to show it. By an upright, honorable life (*life* being the true sense of the word translated "conversation") set forth works adorned with the meekness of wisdom. If your heart has bitter envy and strife, boast not, lie not against the truth.

Above all things, be not proud of your sin; glory not in your own shame! Did they call this being spirited, justly indignant at abuse, consciously self-asserting, or some other commendable or fair-sounding name? Let them beware how they attempt to glorify a selfish spirit that can not bear the light of truth. Let things be called by their right names lest men deceive themselves into believing that sin is holy, that envy and strife are noble qualities!

15. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, devilish.

16. For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* confusion and every evil work.

17. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

18. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

Such wisdom as this of yours which begets envy and strife in the heart, comes not down from above, but wells up from beneath; is of earth—of man's sensualities; of the devil.——Envying and strife beget "confusion"—*i. e.*, disorder, seditions, aggressions upon others—yea, every evil thing.——Over against this, mark the qualities and fruits of that wisdom which cometh from above—such as men obtain in answer to prayer (1:5). First of all it is pure (unselfish, benevolent); then peaceable, gentle, easily persuaded—*i. e.*, yielding to the wishes and the interests of others; full of mercy and good fruits because sincerely, intensely loving the happiness of others. The word for "without partiality" (adiakritos) by etymology should signify making no unjust discriminations; and construed in the light of the passage (2:1–9) may be supposed to refer specially to "respect of persons."——"Without hypocrisy" means exempt from all desire to appear better than they really are. No one element of character in the Pharisaic Jew was more intensely offensive to Jesus than their hypocrisy.——Blessed are the peacemakers, for they are sowing seeds that shall ripen into fruits of peace and blessedness for their future life!

The word "wisdom" as used here (v. 13, 15, 17) means more than discreet conduct, more than a sagacious judgment as to the best measures for attaining one's desired object. It certainly includes the choice of the best objects of pursuit. We must give it essentially that broad high sense which the word has in Job (28:28) and in Solomon: "The fear of the Lord," true piety, the character which is built upon the truth of God, and which accepts his counsels as one's law of life. In this sense it comes down from above and not up from beneath. It is the fruit of divine influence and of heavenly truth upon the soul, and is not the fruit of base passion, begotten of depraved nature and of Satan's instigations.

CHAPTER IV.

Turbulence and political commotion rebuked; traced to evil passions (1–3); emanating from the spirit of the world; always hostile to the Spirit of God (v. 4). To overcome this spirit, God gives grace to the humble (v. 5, 6); God to be sought in submission, but the devil resisted (v. 7, 8); penitence, humiliation before God, brings his blessing (v. 9, 10); evil speaking passes judgment upon God's law (v. 11, 12); human schemes of traffic for gain should not forget the uncertainties of life (v. 13–16). Not to do the good we know—sin (v. 17).

1. From whence *come* wars and fightings among you? *come they* not hence, *even* of your lusts that war in your members?
2. Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and can not obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.
3. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts.

The words used here—"wars," "fightings," "killing" seem to carry the mind beyond social into political life, indicating a state of political unrest; the uprising of men, in considerable bodies, for purposes of insurrection. It is a matter of history that during the period within which this epistle must be dated, all Judea and Galilee were in fearful commotion; seditions, insurrections, petty wars, involving the masses of the people, were rife and terrible. All this Jesus had predicted and of this very period:—"Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars; for nation shall rise up against nation and kingdom against kingdom; men shall betray one another and hate one another" (Matt. 24: 6, 7, 10). But how much the condition of the mother country affected the Jews of the dispersion we have but scanty means of certain knowledge. Inasmuch as the disturbances in Judea and Galilee hinged chiefly upon resistance to the great Roman power, the presumption is strong that the same causes led to similar results in other countries, equally in subjection to Rome.

It must have been a fearful state of society if Christian people were involving themselves in such scenes of passion, conflict, blood and war, whether these were limited to merely social life, or took on such dimensions and character as to be properly political.——James denounces every thing of this sort as utterly unjustifiable; begs them to look at the *causes*—the fiery, ungoverned passions of carnal souls, such as must always provoke resistance, must always fail of their object, evermore exciting like uncontrolled passion in other men, provoking blow for blow, and death for death.——The best manuscripts begin the chapter:—"Whence are wars and whence are fightings among you?"—a change

which calls attention yet more emphatically to the exciting *causes* of collisions, quarrels, and blood-violence so terrible.—— The allusions to "not asking" *i. e.*, in prayer, and to their asking and not receiving because their objects and aims were only selfish, seem to imply that these petty wars were regarded as in some sense *religious*, ostensibly for religious purposes. This was historically true of those fearful uprisings and insurrections which convulsed Judea and Galilee for several years prior to the great Jewish-Roman war which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem. The instigators of resistance to Rome held it to be a sin against the God of Israel to pay tribute or in any way acknowledge allegiance to any other king than their own Messiah. It is supposable that asking God's help in such wars might be only asking amiss, (*badly* in Greek) to consume it upon their lusts—a towering and altogether worldly ambition being at the very bottom of the prayer. The case has in it a great and fruitful moral lesson—suggesting the searching inquiry—*Why* do I pray? *What* lies at the bottom?

4. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

The better manuscripts have the first clause—not "ye adulterers and adulteresses;" but simply—"adulteresses!" and then connect it with the previous verse—thus: "that ye may consume it upon your lusts, adulteresses!" This reading must be preferred. Then we must give the word the sense it has throughout the Old Testament prophets—that spiritual adultery in which they divorced their hearts from their covenant God, and gave it to some idol. James assumes that their professed religion is no better than idolatry—the giving of the heart's homage to worldly, ungodly ambition. Their spirit was of the world, and not of God. And did they not know that the friendship of the world is enmity against God; that if any one wills to be—chooses in the true purpose of his heart (the word means) to be a friend of the world, he constitutes himself thereby an enemy of God? For God asks us to serve him as Supreme King, giving him our whole heart in loving obedience—all which is utterly unlike and forever inconsistent with all the ambitions, loves, affections that are only earthly and sensual.

5. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

6. But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

Here the improved text reads the first clause as a general statement, made with no special reference to the clause next succeeding, thus: "Or think ye that the Scripture speaks in vain?"—— The Scripture every-where sets forth that the love of God and the

love of the world are antagonistic to each other, and can never have the least common sympathy. Are these representations false and vain? By no means.

On this second clause of v. 5, two questions of interpretation arise:—(1.) Whether "the spirit that dwelleth in us" is the human soul, or the Holy Ghost? (2.) Whether the clause should be read affirmatively, or interrogatively? (1.) The received version, sustained by many expositors, supposes the indwelling spirit here to be the human soul under its depraved passions. But the form of expression seems rather to indicate a spirit from without ourselves, entering to *dwell* within us. And the usage of the New Testament in speaking of the Holy Ghost strongly favors this view. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God *dwelleth* in you?" (1 Cor. 3: 16.) "As God hath said—I will *dwell* in them and walk in them," etc. (2 Cor. 6: 16). These considerations seem to me to have decisive weight. (2.) If the reference be to the Holy Ghost dwelling in us, the clause must be read interrogatively: Does the Spirit of God, dwelling in us, push, press us toward envy? Never! All his impulses are toward love, good-will; toward true and supreme joy in others' happiness, and not toward envy. Thus we read the whole verse harmoniously and sensibly: Think ye that the Scripture speaks falsely, vainly? Does the Holy Spirit of God that dwelleth in you inspire lusts toward and unto envy? By no means. On the contrary (v. 6) he gives more grace; more and yet more; perpetually in greater measure as men more greatly need. For this reason he saith in the Scripture (*i. e.*, Prov. 3: 34, where the Septuagint has these identical words)—"God resisteth the proud but giveth grace to the lowly."——That the lowly in spirit find favor before the great and ever-glorious God is put by Israel's greatest prophet in terms at once sublimely grand and tenderly touching: "Thus saith the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place; *with him* also who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." "The heaven is my throne; the earth is my footstool; but to this man *will I look*, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Isa. 57: 15 and 66: 1, 2). What can be said more to impress the moral fitness and the supreme blessedness of having a humble and contrite spirit in the presence of the majesty and purity of the Infinite God!

7. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *ye* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *ye* double-minded.

This passage is in style a model of terseness and antithesis.——Place yourselves *under* God but *against* the devil. Bow sub-

missively to the one; stand in sternest opposition against the other. Never resist God; never yield to the devil. Resist the devil, and he will flee: draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Ah, truly, for he is never far from the heart that humbly seeks him. The father of that prodigal son saw him coming when yet a great way off, and his bowels moved for him! How easy it will always be to find God when the soul is deeply stricken for sin and humbled before the great and good Father! But let the penitence of your soul be deep and honest;—therefore James adds the forceful words—"Cleanse your hands, ye sinners;" cleanse them not with tears only but with restitutions—with the putting off and away of every unclean thing.——Purify your heart, ye double-souled men—who have one soul still cleaving to the world, while ye vainly think to give another to God! Of course this is all hypocrisy; for really, in the truth of the case, man never has but one soul. The thought of giving one to God and keeping the other for sin shows plainly that the one only soul is withheld from God and given to sin and selfishness. This is one of Satan's metaphysical delusions. He is a thorough adept in such fallacies, *if* he can make them pass for truth!

9. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and *your* joy to heaviness.

10. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

Still James presses the point of genuine, thorough contrition for sin. In this there is scarcely the least danger of overdoing; few will ever go too deep. Indeed there is no going too deep, provided only that we do not misjudge God; that our sorrow be duly tempered with the assurance that our Father's mercy is indeed great, above the heavens, and that He loves to forgive. Let it be our part to humble ourselves before the Lord; his, to lift us up. He will do his part full soon when we have done ours full honestly and thoroughly. There is never the least reason for solicitude lest God be slow to begin, or lest he leave his uplifting work but half done. Oh how does he surprise the really contrite soul with the forth-breaking beams of his light and of his love! Ere we are aware, and long before it seemed, in our view, to be called for, behold, God has come, and his gentle hand is felt, lifting the sin-stricken soul up into peaceful trust and repose.——So have these words of our epistle been verified in human experience! So, all down the ages, have they proved themselves to be words in season for the comfort of broken hearts and contrite spirits.

11. Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of *his* brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law; but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.

12. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?

Here is a new subject—that of evil-speaking, censoriousness, slander of Christian brethren.——The best manuscripts make improvement in two points, reading—"Speaketh evil of his brother" *or* (not "and") or "judgeth his brother." In v. 12, add to lawgiver the words "*and judge*," reading it—"There is one Lawgiver and Judge," *i. e.*, One who is both Lawgiver and Judge, able to save and to destroy, etc.

The strong point made in this passage is that speaking evil of a brother or judging him censoriously, is virtually condemning God's law. It practically assumes that God's law, forbidding such evil-speaking is *itself wrong*. For surely, the man who breaks God's law and does not repent of it or condemn himself for it, makes a square issue with God and virtually condemns his law. Either the man who breaks the law is wrong, or God who made the law is wrong. If the law-breaker is right, the law-maker can not be right. Breaking the law, therefore, is virtually traducing, condemning Him who made it. So James says—He who speaks evil of his brother speaks against God, passes his judgment against God's law. This man is not a doer of the law but a judge condemning the law! There is one lawgiver and judge, able to save or to destroy;—to save the obedient; to destroy the transgressor. Who art thou that thou shouldest presume to sit in judgment against thy brother, and so doing, pass thy judgment against the great God!

13. Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

14. Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

15. For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

16. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

Another new subject—the case of men who travel abroad for purposes of traffic and gain, planning and presuming upon life, and perhaps running increased risks, with no just estimate of the dangers, and no proper recognition of their dependence upon God for their preservation. Probably this passion for gain by traffic in foreign lands led to the dispersion of those Jews to whom James is writing. We may suppose they left their native country under this impulse, and were tempted again to push out still further. Hence these admonitions.——"Go to"—a phrase now mostly obsolete—simply calls attention to what is to be said;—Come now, think of this.——The moral purpose of the

passage seems to be to suggest that such perils of life should not be encountered recklessly; that continued life should not be presumed upon without a perpetual trust in God and a committal of our unknown future to his care; and above all, that it by no means becomes us to rejoice in boastful confidence of future life and future gain by traffic. An abiding sense of dependence on God for life and for all its good tends to moderate our otherwise too eager aspirations and struggles for wealth—putting faith in God's providence in the place of faith in hoarded treasures. This is morally wholesome.

17. Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin.

The word "therefore" assumes a logical connection of this verse with something preceding. What is this connection?——Obviously it must be sought in the case and the exhortation that immediately precede; partly because it is the nearest antecedent thought; and partly because the case of rich men is resumed in the opening of the next chapter, and therefore had not passed out of mind.—— Probably therefore, James assumes that those speculating, trafficking men did not judge wisely and well, and did not *do* as well as they *knew*, the passion for getting rich fast—a fortune in a year —pushing them on into real sin. He brings the case to issue under the general principle—every man bound to do all the good he knows how to do; always the best thing for the good of himself, his friends, the world. To know what is the good and best thing, and not do it—is sin. The knowledge carries with it the obligation. To go against the knowledge is to go against the obligation, and this, of course, is sin. If he does not know any thing better which is possible for him to do, he violates no obligation, is charged in the case with no sin. Knowledge of duty measures obligation; obligation disregarded, is the essence of sin.

In this passage, as in several others in this epistle, we are struck with the remarkably just metaphysics of this apostle. He thinks clearly, analyzes moral action profoundly, carries the mind back to fundamental principles with a master's hand. He has no trouble in explaining the difference between God's tempting man and man's tempting himself. He can give the sinless antecedents of real sinning in the processes of lust, working under self-indulgence unto real transgression. In the passage here, we see a perfect philosophy as to the relation which knowledge of duty bears to sin. If all human-built systems of theology had been constructed with the aid of such metaphysical science as we have in this epistle of James, there had been fewer stumbling-blocks and less repulsion in human symbols of faith and in the doctrines taught by good men from the pulpit and the press. The enlightened common sense which reigns throughout the metaphysical principles and philosophy of the Scriptures is simply wonderful. It is not the least among the internal proofs of its real inspiration.

CHAPTER V.

Rich men admonished of their impending retribution (v. 1–3); the laborers whom they have defrauded cry unto God against them (v. 4); their dissolute lives end in ruin (v. 5); their oppression of just but unresisting men awaits God's retribution (v. 6); patience should be sustained by the hope of the Lord's near coming (v. 7, 8); admonition against murmuring (v. 9); examples of patience (v. 10, 11); against swearing (v. 12); prayer of faith for the sick (v. 13–15); mutual confession of faults and effectual prayer (v. 16); Elijah's prayer an example (v. 17, 18); the blessedness of converting sinners (v. 19, 20).

1. Go to now, *ye* rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon *you.*
2. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.
3. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

The apostle assumes that these rich men have become rich by oppressing their laborers or by fraud. Riches so made must surely react to torture their possessors. Nothing can be more forcible than the figure here used—the very rust on their silver and gold bearing witness against them before God, and eating their flesh like fire. The treasures they have amassed are heaped up, not for future enjoyment but for future torment. "In the last days"—time then future, perhaps somewhat indefinite, yet sure to come, and none the less sure for being indefinite—this ill-gotten gain would come up to plague them, testifying both to their own consciences and before God's throne of their iniquities and wrongs.——The allusion to garments as "moth-eaten" reminds us that in those oriental regions, clothing as well as gold and silver was amassed and hoarded—perishable, of course, yet found very commonly among the treasured stores of the wealthy.

4. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.
5. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.
6. Ye have condemned *and* killed the just; *and* he doth not resist you.

The "hire," the promised and just wages of the laborer, kept back by fraud, in violation of promise and of right, cries to God against them. The ears of the mighty Lord of Hosts are open to such cries.——"Ye have nourished"—fattened—"your hearts *for a day of slaughter.*" In the phrase "*as* in a day," etc., the better text omits the word "*as.*" The writer alludes to the fatting of animals for slaughter—fed to the full to fit them for the table. So they had been living in luxury, fattening themselves for a swift and terrible death! They had even pushed their oppression of the poor to the extreme of condemning and killing. Their victims had fallen unresisting: all the more surely would God arise to avenge his murdered poor!

Throughout this portrayal of the retributions that shall befall rich oppressors, we may notice that they come in two lines of suffering, viz: (*a.*) The reaction of conscious guilt upon a moral nature; and, (*b.*) The retribution that must come from a righteous God. There is no attempt to exclude either, or to exalt either in comparison with the other. Each and both are represented as alike sure and as fearfully terrible. "Shall eat your flesh as it were fire," turns our thought to the moral reaction of crime upon the criminal's own moral nature; while the cries of his wronged victim, going up to the ear of the Lord of Hosts, testify that the mighty God will not leave the case to the sole operation of a torturing conscience, but will inflict retributions of his own, sufficing at least to show that his sympathies are for ever with the oppressed and against the oppressors.

7. Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

8. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

Unquestionably the near coming of the Lord is here for a motive to patience, especially to patience under the wrongs and oppressions which Christians were enduring in part perhaps from the overbearing of the rich; in part from persecutions fatal to life. These are the points which appear in the previous context. Consequently the "coming of the Lord" is here assumed to be a time of retribution upon the wicked—at once the day of redress and deliverance for the righteous and of just punishment upon the ungodly oppressor. Here, therefore, we meet the grave question: What "coming" was this? What views had James of a "coming of the Lord," then near, which should bring with it these results?

It scarcely admits of doubt that this expectation of a near coming of the Lord—common to James; to Paul (Rom. 13: 14 and Phil. 4: 5); to the writer to the Hebrews (10: 25, 37); to Peter (1 Eps. 4: 7); and to John (1 Eps. 2: 18)—was begotten in their

minds by Christ's own words, of which we may take Matthew 24 as essentially embodying the prophecies upon which they rested. In that prophecy they saw the future destruction of Jerusalem, and understood it to be within that generation. The cardinal idea underlying the ruin of that city was *divine retribution* for the great sin of the Jewish nation. It was clothed in strong, terrible imagery of such sort as must have made the impression of a fearful, overwhelming catastrophe, coupled perhaps in some undefined relation with the final judgment. Even to us as we read it to-day, it carries our thought strongly to a scene of retribution which shall involve, not Jerusalem and the Jewish nation alone, but the whole world. I think we must admit that Jesus intended to connect the earlier judgment with the later—the judgment on Jerusalem with the final judgment on the world—in such a way that the former should be at once a pledge and an illustration of the latter. This he might properly do without involving any doctrine as to the *time* when the latter would take place. The question of *time* as to the final judgment, it was of no importance whatever to reveal. It seems not to have been revealed at all to the apostles. They may have had their own ideas; but not from the revealing Spirit. Jesus said to them very definitely: "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons" (Acts 1: 7). It involves no impeachment of their real inspiration for all purposes of important Christian truth and instruction to suppose that they were not enlightened as to the *time* of Christ's coming for the final judgment. They may have expected more at the point of Jerusalem's fall than the facts amounted to. I see no reason to recoil from this supposition as if it militated against their full inspiration in respect to all the truth God designed through them to teach mankind. The exact point of time for the final judgment was certainly never embraced in the system of truth revealed and to be taught by them. *If* they had impressions or expectations on this point, they formed and held them on their own personal responsibility, not upon the responsibility of the inditing Spirit. I make this *if* emphatic; for I by no means believe that they really expected (or purposely taught) the end of the world within their generation. There are other senses in which "the end of all things is at hand." Paul certainly looked for the conversion of the masses of both Jews and Gentiles before the end should come (Rom. 11: 25, 26). He corrected the misapprehension of the Thessalonian brethren, assuring them he never meant to say that Christ's final coming was then very near (2 Thess. 2: 1–3). But this theme is too large to be treated exhaustively here.

9. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.

"Grudge not," following the sense of the original, must mean *murmur not;* find not fault, one with another, brethren. Not merely moderate but suppress your spirit of fault-finding, lest ye be condemned by him who said: "Judge not, that ye be not

judged" (Matt. 7: 1). A Judge greater than yourselves stands at the door, to overhear every harsh word and to punish every censorious, sharp judgment ye pass against one another. Take heed that ye do not assume to wrest from him and wield yourselves his Supreme prerogative as the one only Judge of men. Take heed that your spirit be evermore unselfish, kind, forbearing, forgiving,—even as becomes men themselves in the flesh, encompassed with manifold infirmities—often themselves offending, and thus greatly needing continual forbearance and mercy from the Great Judge!

10. Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.

11. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

Old Testament history has never attempted to make a complete record of the persecutions endured by the Lord's prophets from the ungodly men to whom they bore the fearful words of the Lord. Incidentally a few such cases come to view; *e. g.*, of Micaiah son of Imlah put in prison, fed with bread and water of affliction for his stern fidelity to Jehovah (2 Chron. 18: 6, 7, 25, 26); of Zechariah son of Jehoiada the priest whom they slew at the commandment of the king in the court of the temple (2 Chron. 24: 20–22); and not least Jeremiah, put in the stocks, immured in an underground prison and sunk in the mire; in frequent peril of life;—while in general the case of the prophets drew from Stephen the strong rebuke—"Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them who showed before the coming of the Just One" (Acts 7: 52). The unrecorded cases known only by tradition must have been a host. The Jews to whom Stephen spake and those also to whom James wrote must have heard of them. Let them take those glorious heroes of faith and endurance as their examples!——Behold, we count the men happy who *have* endured (so the Greek reads). After the suffering is past and patience has "had its perfect work" and borne its ripened fruits and brought to the sufferer his glorious reward, who does not celebrate the triumph and extol the virtues of the glorified martyrs!

Ye have heard of the long and bitter trial of Job and of his patience under the accumulated burdens of pain and of abuse; ye have seen in the record how the Lord brought him out at the end and made the last years of his long life radiant with light and rich in peace and blessedness. How gloriously did the Lord reward his latter end!——All this—it scarcely need be said—assumes that Job was a veritable historic character—not a myth—not a poetic fancy, but a real man of human flesh and blood, to be classed with the suffering prophets of their nation's history—with Micaiah, Zedekiah, Jeremiah.

12. But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and *your* nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

This abbreviates but essentially reiterates the teaching of Christ on this point—the uncalled for, irreverent oath. The fact that the solemn oath was in a few special cases required, became, perhaps, the innocent occasion for this fearful and perilous abuse. Men whose veracity is not satisfactorily established by their general, well-known, truthfulness, seem to feel that they must strengthen the confidence of men in their word by the fearful oath—but never with any better result than to shake the confidence they would fain strengthen—often destroy it utterly. For the object they seek, no folly can be greater; in view of its moral results upon their own souls, no sin is more hardening and depraving; as toward God no offense is more sure of swift and terrible retribution! If other sins are folly, this much more. It is pitiful to see men rush madly and defiantly upon the storm of Jehovah's fiercest thunderbolts, invoking his name to bolster up their falsehoods; challenging him to take note of their sins and wither their souls under his eternal frown! As if they feared lest somehow their sin might escape the notice of the All-seeing God! As if it would be a calamity not to secure his attention to their blasphemy and lies!

13. Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

Of course in affliction, let men pray. The impulse is natural —almost universal. It is also appropriate—most entirely so. In all human straitnesses, God only is our refuge. This is his name of old—"a very present help in trouble." O, the wealth of precious testimony which has been accumulating all down the ages, from the experience of those who have sought the Lord in their affliction, and never in vain!

> "I'll drop my burden at his feet,
> And bear a song away."

"Is any merry"?——But this word "merry" is liable to misrepresent the apostle. The word he used means—not hilarious, not gleeful—full of fun and frolic; but means—of a *happy mind;* joyful; of good cheer, having an exuberance of animal life. Let such pour forth their joy in psalms of praise. Why not? Why not praise God for such health and such a fund of physical enjoyment? Such praise is a purely rational joy; you will never have cause to be ashamed of it. It is worthy of your nobler nature, and due to the glorious Giver of your blessings. Thus in every variety and indeed in all the extremes of physical condition;—in the utmost possibilities of pain and weakness, and also in the exuberance of joy and strength, let us have God ever

near; let the outgoing of our thought and emotion be unto him —from the depth of our pain, in prayer; from the fullness of our pleasure, in praise and song.

14. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

15. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

These verses open a subject of profound interest.——We have, first, the preliminary question—whether the case contemplated here is one of special sort, relating to sickness or some evil sent in special judgment for special sin.——This inquiry is suggested by the words—"If he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him;"—*i. e.*, if his sickness has come upon him because of some sin which called for this visitation of God upon him, then, in answer to the prayer of faith, he shall be not only restored to health but forgiven of his sin.——The history of the apostolic age shows that such visitations of maladies for sin did occur. Paul to the Corinthians makes several allusions which imply this; *e. g.*, referring to their desecration of the Lord's supper, he writes (1 Cor. 11: 30): "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" (in death).——In the case of the member guilty of incest (1 Cor. 5: 4, 5) he spake of "delivering such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit may be saved," etc.——To Timothy he wrote (1 Tim. 1: 20) of Hymeneus and Alexander, "whom I have delivered unto Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme."——The case of Elymas the sorcerer (Acts 13: 8–11) is fully in point.——The fact therefore of such inflictions in that age is fully established.

But the doctrine of our passage need not be—should not be—restricted to this class of cases; for the apostle purposely embraces other cases as well as this:—"*If* he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him"—the prayer of faith covering, therefore, by the supposition, other forms of sickness, not thus occasioned.

The next important question pertains to "*the prayer of faith.*" Is the word "*faith*" used here in the sense of a general confidence that God hears prayer whenever the conditions of acceptable prayer are met and whenever it pleases him; or in the special sense of that conscious assurance of the particular blessing asked which God sometimes grants. The latter will be analogous to the faith that was requisite for miracles, as we learn from Mark 11: 22, 23; "Whosoever shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and *shall not doubt in his heart*, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith." Manifestly men wrought miracles in answer to no other prayer

and upon the basis of no other faith but this. God gave them this special assurance, and never the miracle-working power without this antecedent faith for it.——It is a thing of Christian experience that, in cases which involve no miracle, God sometimes gives a similar assurance—a very special faith that the blessing sought will be granted. It seems to me strongly probable, if not even certain, that this special assurance is here intended by the words—"*the prayer of faith.*" They are specially suggestive of this idea.——Moreover, the blessing itself belongs to a class as to which no mortal can know beforehand that God will grant it save by means of a special assurance brought to his consciousness by the Divine Spirit. It were simple folly to suppose that God leaves it to Christian people to determine of their own will what sicknesses he shall heal in answer to prayer. That is to say—God only can know whether it be wise for him to hear prayer for recovery from sickness. It may be, and again it may not be. Whenever it is, he may grant this foregoing assurance of the blessing. Then "the prayer of faith shall save the sick."

It remains to inquire whether restorations from sickness in answer to the prayer of faith are in our day (in the proper sense of the word) miraculous; and if not, then on what principles they are to be accounted for. Where comes in the divine hand in answer to prayer, with no violation of natural law?

A real miracle supposes divine power exerted otherwise than according to natural law. We may speak of it as superseding, deviating from, or overruling natural law, as (*e. g.*) in raising the dead to life.

The following points, bearing on our present question, may be considered as reliably established.

1. Christ gave to his apostles the miraculous power of healing the sick in answer to the prayer of faith and in his own name. See the original grant (Matt. 10: 1)—repeated after his resurrection (Mark 16: 17, 18); illustrated in history (Acts 5: 15, 16 and 8: 7, 13 and 9: 17, 18 and 28: 8, 9, etc.)

2. Plainly the apostles were able to confer on others this miracle-working power, as one form of the "powers of the Holy Ghost." See the case of Stephen (Acts 6: 5–8), and the general fact (1 Cor. 12: 9).

3. There is very strong ground for the opinion that none of these miraculous powers are in the church at the present day; and indeed, that none have been since the age of the apostles; *i. e.*, since the New Testament inspired records were completed. ——Put in form as brief as possible, the arguments for this opinion which I regard as valid are these:

(1.) The absence of special reason for miraculous power, such as existed in the apostolic age, viz., to authenticate a revelation from God. This while it continued was a worthy end or reason for miracles.

(2.) The power of the principle or law which we may call—*the*

conservation of miraculous force, it being very obviously the divine policy and the doctrine of reason as well, never to use miracle except where a worthy exigency demands it. If used beyond this limitation, miracles would become self-destructive, *i. e.*, would defeat their own end. They would cease to have the force of miracles.

(3.) Ever since the death of those who received this gift of the Holy Ghost from the hands of the apostles, there has been a marked absence of conclusive testimony to the fact of real miracle. Pretensions to miraculous power have never ceased; satisfactory evidence has.

Passing that point, it remains to say that God may yet give his people the prayer of faith for healing the sick, and may heal in answer to such prayer *in modes of operation which involve no real miracle*. So that, with not the least pretension to miraculous power, and with not the least expectation of it, prayer for the healing of the sick may still be perfectly legitimate; and cures that may seem to be very extraordinary may really be wrought.

If the inquiry be raised—How is this result achieved? Under what laws is this efficiency exerted?—I should answer—All may be comprised under these three:

1. The spiritual power of the Holy Ghost and of truth upon the human mind; in this case, the mind of the patient.

2. The power of the mind over the body.

The former may manifest itself in producing a calm, quiet state of the nervous system; or an exaltation of mind, and a great augmentation of mind-power.

The latter—the action of mind upon body—comes under a universal law, a law in many points mysterious, yet none the less a real law. In the human constitution, mind does act upon body. Imagination, fear, hope, simple force of will—all have an immense range of power for evil or for good, mightily affecting the physical condition of the body. Thus God may heal the sick in answer to prayer by acting primarily upon mind; secondarily, through the mind upon the body, and all this, with no deviation from established law; *i. e.*, with no miracle.

3. No one can say how much, without the least miraculous agency, God may act upon the patient through medical remedies; how much he may lead the thought and judgment which detects the real disease and then prescribes treatment. Facts of this sort may hinge upon prayer and yet involve no miracle.

It scarcely need be said that there must be limitations to the power of even the prayer of faith to save the sick. It were folly to assume that this can apply and avail in all possible cases, or to any one patient forever, with never a failure; for this, if true and feasible, might forever contravene the law of universal mortality, and some of our dear friends we should never let die. ——Moreover, by the very nature of the law under which this healing power acts, it can never apply to the raising of the dead

to life, for in this case by the supposition, mind is gone; all mind-force upon body has ceased.

As to "anointing with oil in the name of the Lord," the custom in Israel came down from the ceremonies used in the ordination of priests and the inauguration of kings—in each class of cases, symbolic of the unction of the Spirit of God which gave them their special endowment for their work. In the case of the sick it was a recognition, in symbol, of the grace given by the Spirit —grace which in that age may have been miraculous, or may not.

16. Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

17. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

18. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

In this particular case, the mutual confession of faults and the mutual prayer for healing seem to have been closely connected with those cases of special sickness peculiar to that age, brought to view in the verse preceding—"If he have committed sins," etc. It should be noted that the earlier manuscripts give, instead of the Greek word for faults, the very word for sins (amartias), which we have in v. 15, making it yet more certain that this clause refers to that:—"If he have committed *sins:*"—"Confess your *sins* one to another."

The words—"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" were no doubt suggested by the cures often wrought in answer to the prayer of faith. Yet we are by no means bound to restrict to that class of facts the great truth they affirm. The apostle himself does not restrict it, for he appeals to the prayer of Elijah for illustration and proof—a case of prayer, not for healing in disease, but for drought and for rain.——Let it be noted that the two words—"effectual" and "fervent"—are here combined to give the sense of but one word in the original Greek, viz., the participle (*energoumene*)—a word from which we derive our word "*energy.*" It legitimately signifies an *energetic* prayer—a prayer that moves the soul, that has an intense significance, that comes of strong and earnest feeling and means all it says.——It is scarcely supposable that the translators of our version meant by "effectual" precisely what we should mean now, since it is a weak tautology to say that an effectual prayer is very effective. I judge they intended to use it as an adverb to qualify the adjective "fervent"—an *intensely* fervent prayer.

——Such a prayer, they would say, has a mighty power; is strong (iskuei) mighty; avails much.

It was pertinent to say here that Elijah was nothing more than a man—a man of human frailties like ourselves.

But for this suggestion we might be ready to suppose that one so mighty in prayer moved in a plane of being higher than mortal. We may dismiss that notion; for Elijah was certainly a man of moods, of variable temperament, much like other men; capable one day of most sublime exaltation of soul; and again on another day, of sad, almost humiliating depression and discouragement. In his case the reaction of overtasked nerve-power, and an overworked body, was terrible. Did he not apparently lose sight of the mighty arm of God when he sank down under that juniper tree and begged that he might die?——It was in consideration of the weakness of his mortal flesh that God dealt with him so tenderly—much as Jesus apologized for his weary disciples; "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matt. 26: 41).

But we return to his prayer. The history is silent as to his praying earnestly that it might *not* rain. Shall we assume that this fact came down by tradition; or was it an inference from the words of the record (1 Kings 17: 1) as spoken by Elijah to Ahab: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years but according to my word"? This does not say that the withholding of rain was any result of his word; but only that no dew or rain should come save by and through his word.——Remarkably the record (in 1 Kings 18: 44–46) of what Elijah said and did in connection with the sending of that rain does not speak in definite words of *prayer*. Yet it fully enough implies prayer. He told Ahab there "was a sound of abundance of rain." He went up to the top of Carmel; "cast himself down upon the earth and put his face between his knees." This was the attitude of most humble, imploring prayer. Seven times in succession he sent his servant to the summit peak of Carmel to look out upon the great western waters to see if tokens of rain were visible. All this time he was in the audience chamber of the Almighty, imploring rain. At last the report came back—a little cloud as a man's hand rising as an exhalation from those Mediterranean waters. This was enough. His prayer was answered; the rain was surely coming! Let Ahab mount his chariot and strike for his palace-home, that the great rain stay him not! God had heard the voice of a mortal man, and the long and fearful drought was at an end!——So when the Lord pleases, he suffers his children to talk and plead with him in mighty wrestlings, till deliverance comes. The earnest, energetic prayer has power with God. We may bear this living truth in our heart and use it all the days of our mortal life.

19. Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him;

20. Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner

from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

The connection of thought between these verses and the preceding is tacit and implied—not expressed—thus: It may happen that some of your Christian brethren shall lapse into lamentable sin, and so bring sore judgments of sickness upon the body, and great spiritual darkness upon the soul (v. 14–16). Then, the warm pity, the uplifting sympathy, and the fervent prayer of their brethren may avail to save these erring men. Put a special case before your mind and so measure the precious rewards of such Christian labor for the fallen. "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth and one convert him"—bring him back to truth, to duty, and to Christ—"let him know for his encouragement and joy," that he who so converts a sinner shall save his soul from death and hide a multitude of sins." Such is the line of thought. A professed Christian brother lapsed into sin is the case supposed. The fall may be like that of Peter; indeed, the terms used suggest his case. Yet it should be noted that the phrases —"err from the truth," and "the error of his way," manifestly refer to the same thing, and therefore suggest that in the apostle's thought, truth and Christian life stand in very intimate—not to say almost identical relations. Erring from truth brings on erring from the Christian way—course of life. Truth is evermore "in order to goodness"; as also error is in order to badness, sin. When a man's Christian faith was overthrown, his Christian life too went down. Gospel truth as held in those days by apostles and their churches wrought unto holy living, always, by its legitimate influence, by a moral necessity. Erring from the truth let men drop at once into not only darkness but sin—into the very snare of Satan.

The improved text reads—not "save a soul" (indefinite), but "save *his* soul"—the soul of the once erring but now converted brother.

The "hiding of a multitude of sins looks toward that wonderful redemption and forgiveness of sins which the Scriptures so often represent as "the blotting out of all their iniquities"; causing them to "be remembered no more"; "casting all their sins into the depths of the sea." Will it not be an everlasting joy in the bosom of every one who "saves a soul from death" that thereby a multitude of sins are sunk forever out of view—so forgiven as to be remembered no more? The apostle holds this glorious result before our mind that we may take in its inspiring power and give ourselves to all labor and prayer to save men's souls from death.

Thus ends this apostolic letter. Every paragraph of it impresses us that the gospel as held by James was a power that wrought unto righteousness. With giant arm he battled against sin; with mighty logic he pled for purity of life and for such righteousness as is born of the truth as it is in Jesus. With no waste

words; with never a weak expression; saying with prodigious force the things his earnest soul moved him to say, he has left us a brief letter which the Christian world could ill afford to spare; which no fair, open, impressible mind can read without being toned up thereby to a purer and more earnest life for God and righteousness.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

THE subjects that naturally introduce us to the intelligent reading and study of these epistles are,

I. THE WRITER.

II. *The* GENUINENESS *of the second epistle.*

III. *The date and the place where written.*

IV. *The churches addressed;* their locality, and general character;

V. The special OCCASION for these epistles, and their *object.*

I. THE WRITER.

The gospel histories—those of the four evangelists and the Acts—make us well acquainted with the apostle, Simon Peter. A fisherman of Galilee; with his brother Andrew a hearer and apparently a disciple of John the Baptist—he early became acquainted with Jesus, and from the first, took the position of a leader among the twelve disciples. Naturally impulsive, ardent, impetuous almost to the point of rashness—a born leader of men—he had in him the elements of power, but, as often happens with such native elements, they greatly needed culture and training. Here therefore was educating work for the kind and faithful hand of the Master. His ways of discipline with this strong but wayward man give us many a sweet lesson in the patience and wisdom of the Great Teacher, and make us hopeful that under equally wise and kind discipline, other not less wayward and rough natures may be molded into order, beauty, and strength.——Peter's great sin in denying his master has made his name and history memorable. His bitter repentance; his prompt return to love and duty; the earnest devotion of his soul thenceforward to fearless testimony for Christ, fill out that life-history with the noble record of a true penitent.

The successive steps of his restoration to penitence and the new life are too vital in his history and too full of interest and instruction to be lightly passed over.

Of the four evangelists, Luke only records that after Peter's last denial, and just at the point when "the cock crew," the Lord turned and *looked upon Peter;* and thereupon, Peter remembered his words of forewarning and immediately "went out and wept bitterly." (Luke 22: 60–62.) Rebuke and sorrow, pity and love, were put into that one look, we must suppose, more impressively than any words could express them. So of the effect on Peter; not a word from his lips is on record; but there were tears, bitter tears. We are left to imagine what thoughts and emotions of shame, grief, humiliation, astonishment at himself, crowded fast upon his stricken heart.——Jesus did not forget Peter. Mark notes the circumstance that the angel at the door of the sepulcher said to the women—"Go your way, tell his disciples *and Peter* that he goeth into Galilee" (Mark 16: 7); and repeatedly we are told that Jesus made a special manifestation of himself to Peter. Both Luke and Paul seem to imply that (perhaps with the exception of his appearance to Mary and the women) this, to Peter, was the very first. The two brethren returning from Emmaus, found the disciples gathered together, saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, *and hath appeared unto Simon*" (Luke 24: 34). So Paul (1 Cor. 15: 5)—"He was seen of Cephas (Peter); then of the twelve." The spoken words of that interview are not on record. The fact of it witnesses that the old love and confidence were returning; that Jesus had not cast off his penitent child; and that Peter was not left to despair of being made again a pardoned and trusted son.——In the scenes at the sea of Galilee which John only has narrated, it would seem that Jesus purposely administered a gentle rebuke to Peter for assuming to be more true and devoted to his Lord than any of his brethren, three times pressing the question—"Lovest thou me more than these" other disciples do? Jesus knew the weak point in the character of Peter, and therefore gave him this gentle reminder. Thereafter we meet with nothing that even suggests the least lack of mutual confidence between Peter and his Lord. Filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, he preached Christ with a boldness that would not quail before danger; stood up courageously before the very sanhedrim whose presence had so appalled him when he first saw his Master

in their hands.——Onward we see him foremost of the apostles in bearing the gospel to Samaria, and first to break through the great caste-barrier between Jews and Gentiles, and practically learn that momentous doctrine—"God no *respecter of persons;* but in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him." This might seem to have prepared Peter to become the first and great apostle to the Gentiles. But the Lord had another instrument in preparation, in the person of Saul the persecutor, who soon after came to the front and bore the standard of the cross abroad over the Gentile world with unsurpassed energy and success. After the great Council at Jerusalem (A. D. 50), (Acts 15), the thread of New Testament history follows the life and labors of Paul, and we read little of Peter. No historian, such as Luke was to Paul, accompanied Peter, aiding in his work and then recording under inspiration his labors and their results. The absence of such history in our New Testament by no means proves that Peter was idle or that his labors were of small account. Suffice it that a wisdom more than human determined how much and what history of the great apostolic labors of the age should go into the inspired canon.

Peter's first epistle came early into general use among the churches. Its genuineness was never questioned. Origen wrote:—"Peter has left one epistle acknowledged to be his." Eusebius says (Hist. Eccl. iii: 3): "One epistle of Peter called the first is universally received." Irenæus has this (Adv. Her. iv: 9): Peter says in his epistle, "In whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice," etc. (1 Pet. 1: 8). Tertullian writes—"Peter says to the inhabitants of Pontus" etc. (quoting 1 Peter 2: 20). These cases will suffice to show how the early fathers spake of Peter's first epistle and certified to its universal reception in the second and third centuries. Quotations from this epistle, indorsing it as accepted scripture, appear in the earliest and most reliable Christian fathers; *e. g.*, Clement of Rome (A. D. 90–100); Pastor Hermas (early in the second century); Polycarp (one of John's disciples); Papias (of the second century); Irenæus (A. D. 178–202); Clement of Alexandria (A. D. 187–220); Tertullian (A. D. 200–220); Origen (died A. D. 254); Cyprian (Bp. A. D. 248–256); Eusebius (died A. D. 340); Athanasius (Bp. A. D. 326–373), and Jerome (flourished A. D. 350–420).

Internal testimony to its genuineness is all that need be desired.

II. Special notice should be taken of the fact that the genuineness of the second epistle has been called in question. Some modern critics, chiefly German, have rejected it from the canon. Summarily the grounds assigned for this have been these: (1.) Doubts as to its genuineness reported to us by some of the early Christian fathers; (2.) Differences of style as compared with the first epistle. The fact of such difference is noticed by some of the early fathers, and has weight with those modern critics who discredit the genuineness of the epistle.

We turn to the testimony of the fathers.

Origen, apparently the earliest witness, whose references are beyond dispute, says (in Eusebius vi: 25): "Peter has left one acknowledged epistle, and perhaps a second; for this is contested." Yet he speaks elsewhere of *two* epistles of Peter (Homily on Joshua), and cites the second epistle in his Homily on Leviticus. He remarks that "the Scripture says in a certain place:" "The dumb ass, replying with a human voice, forbad the madness of the prophet" (Balaam)—referring to 2 Pet. 2: 16. It is therefore plain that Origen himself accredited 2 Peter as genuine "Scripture."——It is probable (not absolutely certain) that Clement of Rome refers to 2 Pet. 2: 6–9, and also Irenæus to 2 Pet. 3: 8. These fathers were earlier than Origen, but their references to the epistle are questioned.——Eusebius calls James the first of seven catholic epistles. In this number seven, 2 Peter must have been included. Yet he remarks that "the epistle called the Second of Peter, as we have been informed, has not been received as a part of the New Testament. Nevertheless, appearing to many to be useful, it has been carefully studied with the other Scriptures." (Hist. Eccl. iii: 3.)——Didymus of Alexandria and his pupil Jerome refer to doubts entertained by some, the former saying: "It should not be concealed that this epistle was considered spurious, and that although published, it was not in the canon." Jerome observes that "Peter wrote two epistles called catholic (*i. e.*, general), the second of which had been denied by many to be his because of the difference of style." With other early fathers, he ascribed this difference of style to the circumstance that Peter employed different interpreters to translate his epistles into Greek. It was assumed that Peter had not sufficient knowledge of Greek to write it without

the aid of an interpreter to translate for him. Thus these differences of style were accounted for with no disparagement to the equal authorship of Peter to both.——Before the close of the fourth century, these doubts had subsided, and this epistle was accredited by Athanasius, Cyril, Epiphanius, Jerome, and Augustine.

III. The following points should be specially considered:

1. This epistle, equally with the first, bears the name of the apostle Peter (1: 1) and definitely speaks of itself as "the second:" "This second epistle I now write unto you" (3: 1). The writer therefore certainly intended to have this epistle pass as written by Peter. The supposition of a purposed fraud is very improbable; that, being a fraud, it should ever have gained credit as written by Peter, is yet more so.

2. The differences of style between the first and this present no serious obstacle to the supposition of its having been written by the same Peter. The Christian fathers (as above) may have accounted truly for these differences. On the other hand, strong resemblances appear, of such sort as should offset and counterbalance the differences. Prof. Stowe (Books of the Bible, p. 407) says: "The internal evidence from the peculiar use of single words in the two epistles, is thoroughly convincing. There are in both the same striking peculiarities of language, occurring nowhere else or but seldom in all the New Testament. The word (apothesis) is found in 1 Pet. 3: 21 and 2 Pet. 1: 14 in the same sense, but nowhere else in the New Testament. The word (aretè) occurs in 1 Pet. 2: 9 and 2 Pet. 1: 3, 5, and but once besides in all the New Testament. The word (aspilos) is in 1 Pet. 1: 19 and in 2 Pet. 3: 14, and only twice besides in the New Testament. Again, the word (anastrophe) occurs six times in 1 Peter, twice in 2 Peter, and only once besides in each of the following: James, 1 Timothy, Ephesians, and Galatians. In ordinary cases these facts alone would be deemed sufficient to establish identity of authorship."

3. The early doubts of its genuineness may have been due to the circumstance that it was addressed to no church or well-defined body of Christian people, and therefore was not left in any one's special care. Naturally an epistle addressed to a particular church (*e. g.*, Corinth or Philippi) fell at once into *its* special care; was indorsed by that church, and from that center went abroad to other churches. But an

epistle addressed "to them who have obtained like precious faith with us," belonged by its address to all Christians in general and to none in particular. This may account for its tardy reception among the great body of Christians in that age.

4. Under these circumstances the early doubt and hesitation as to this epistle should be taken as gratifying evidence of very scrupulous care rather than as damaging evidence against its veritable genuineness.

IV. Their *date*, and the *place* where each was written.

Internal marks show that the first epistle was written to Christians under persecution (1: 6, 7, and 4: 12–19, and 5: 9, 10). There seems no reason to question the current opinion that this was the persecution brought upon the churches by Nero (A. D. 64–68). Hence critics have usually assigned the date of the first epistle about A. D. 64.

The second epistle was written when Peter supposed his own martyrdom to be near (1: 13, 14). He suffered probably about A. D. 67, and this epistle is therefore dated about 66. Precise historic accuracy as to date should not be expected.

As to the *place* whence the first epistle was written, the question turns on 1 Pet. 5: 13: "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you." The diversity of opinion is over the sense of the name "Babylon," whether symbolic, as it is supposed to be in prophecy, or historic, for the great city of the Chaldeans. The latter is doubtless the correct view—the salutations of a letter being no place for the symbolic as against the historic sense. It is simply incredible that Peter should have used the name Babylon for the purpose here indicated, in any other sense than the historic. It should also be considered that the provinces specified in 1 Pet. 1: 1, "Pontus, Galatia," etc., had obviously been the field of Peter's missionary labors, which fact of itself greatly enhances the probability that he had visited Babylon, where it is well known there was a large Jewish population.

In studying the history of Peter's missionary labors, the first and most vital step is to estimate the credibility of his ancient historians. Unfortunately for the cause of historic truth, it has been for the supposed interests of the papal church to make the utmost account of Peter, and to locate him in or near Rome at all events. Consequently fresh historic statements were starting up and reported all along

down the ages—things utterly unknown to the early fathers. This circumstance led Mosheim to sift the historic testimonies and to say—"I would not reject all that is clearly attested by Origen, Eusebius, Gregory Nazianzen, Paulinus, Jerome, Socrates and some more ancient writers quoted by Eusebius; but what is attested only by authors subseqent to these or unknown, I would not readily believe unless facts offer themselves to corroborate the testimony."——Following these judicious rules of Mosheim (says Dr. Murdock) we may believe that Peter, after preaching long in Judea and other parts of Syria, probably visited Babylon, Asia Minor, and finally Rome, where he was crucified," (Mosh. i. 57). —More recent writers than Murdock and Mosheim have scarcely improved upon either the historic facts or the wisdom of their critical judgment.

Under so much reliable light of history we may locate the writing of the first epistle at Babylon. Where the second was written the epistle itself gives no intimation, and we must be content not to know.

V. The *churches addressed and their locality.*

The first epistle locates the people addressed as "scattered abroad" in these five provinces—viz., "Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia." Of these Pontus lay upon the southern shore of the Black Sea, near its eastern extremity; Bithynia also upon the southern shore, but near its western end; while Cappadocia, Galatia and Asia lay south of these, stretching westward in the order here given; *i. e.*, Pontus and Cappadocia on the east, towards Armenia and the head waters of the Euphrates; the others farther west. ——Three of these five, viz., Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, appear in the enumeration of places from which men were present at the great Pentecost as in Acts 2: 9, 10. This fact suggests that Jews and proselytes were even then scattered over those provinces; so that, returning home from those wonderfully impressive scenes, they may have carried with them the first rays of gospel light at even that early day.——The name "Asia" as used here is by no means the great continent now known by this name, nor even all that is known in modern times as Asia Minor; but a much smaller province.

That Peter had traveled and preached in these provinces may be assumed to be probable, yet we lack original historic evidence. He had no traveling companion, such as Paul had in Luke, to aid him in his labors, and then, under in-

spiration, write out his history. It is not hinted why the inspired history of apostolic missionary labors is so meager, unless it comes under the reason assigned for omitting the yet more important words and deeds of Jesus—viz., lest even the world itself might not contain the books that would have been written.——Whether Peter had or had not been personally in those remote provinces, his name had doubtless been there ever since the scenes of the great Pentecost. At the date of this epistle some of the fathers were supposably still living who heard his first great sermon under that wonderful inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

VI. In studying the objects had specially in view in the first epistle, we may fitly hold in mind the great fact, fully indicated, that those scattered brethren were at least in peril if not under the endurance of violent persecution. To strengthen their moral courage and brace their souls to patient endurance, Peter did not confine himself to the glories of the martyr's crown, and said nothing that would naturally minister to a factitious heroism for the present glory thereof. But with a far more broad and just conception of the case, he sets himself to build up their real piety solid from the bottom and on its just and most enduring foundations. He holds before them and very near to their hearts that precious Redeemer, Jesus, whose resurrection from the dead had given them a lively hope; who, his own self had borne their sins in his own body on the tree; whom, not having seen, they had loved, and in whom, though not yet seeing him, they had believed and therein rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory.——The entire epistle may well be studied with this guiding thread in our hand—the bearing of every great consideration presented herein upon the intrinsic energy and strength of the Christian life in their heart. Even the special duties that grow up under our various social relations—those of wives, husbands, servants, subjects under civil government—are not to be neglected but rather cultivated with the more diligence in times of extreme personal peril, that Christians under sternest trial may adorn the gospel and confound their enemies. Hence the scope and bearing of this first epistle sustains a tone of moral purity, dignity and grandeur that has rarely been equaled; we may perhaps say—never surpassed.

The second epistle has some of the same qualities, particularly in chapter 1. The second chapter exposes the vile character and pernicious ways of false teachers then infest-

ing those churches; while the third bears upon scoffers—setting forth their spirit, their folly and their doom. We must think of the aged, venerable Peter as writing this second epistle under a sense that his end was near and that these were his last words. His thought turned mostly on special points that seemed to him of urgent importance. Consequently we have no right in this epistle to look for those large, broad views of the whole Christian life which make his first epistle so grand and so impressive. Each fills its place admirably. We shall read them with ever-growing admiration of their wisdom and of their power, and with gratitude to the inditing Spirit that moved to this writing and to the kind Providence that has preserved them to bless all the generations of God's people to the end of time.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER.

CHAPTER I.

The author incorporates in his address a description of the Christian; gives his readers his benediction (v. 1, 2); praises God for his great mercy in the salvation of the gospel (v. 3), and further describes it (v. 4, 5); which is ground for exceeding joy even in extremest peril (v. 6); every trial of their faith is proving it as fire proves and purifies gold (v. 7); Jesus, though unseen, yet loved and through faith, a fountain of unspeakable joy, the end of which shall be salvation (v. 8, 9). How the old prophets studied and loved the Coming One—as do the angels also (v. 10–12)—all which considerations should inspire to a sober, obedient, earnest, holy life (v. 13–16). Honest prayer to the infinitely pure Father should impress reverential fear (v. 17); the redeeming blood of Christ should constrain and hold men to the life of faith and hope in God (v. 18–21). As obeying the truth through the Spirit had wrought purity in their hearts and love of the brethren, so should they cherish such purity and love more and more, the word of God being not perishable but eternal in its nature and claims (v. 22–25).

1. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

2. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

These "strangers" were better called sojourners, in a country not their own. The Greek word for "scattered" suggests that they were Jews, dispersed over these provinces—this being the usual term to describe this people in their dispersions. (So in John 7: 35 and James 1: 1.) The question whether the people addressed were by nationality Jews has been discussed and disputed far more than its importance can justify. I will only say in brief—that the words of this v. 1 look toward Jews; as does also the fact that Jews and proselytes came up from these prov-

inces to the Pentecost of Acts 2; that the epistle assumes its readers to be familiar with Old Testament prophets and their writings (1: 10–12 and 2: 6 and 2 Eps. 1: 20, 21 and 3: 2, 13); also with Old Testament history and historic characters (1 Pet. 3: 6, 20 and 2 Pet. 2: 5–8, 15, 16): and that all this testimony is by no means set aside, or even materially weakened by such words as those in 1 Eps. 4: 3; "For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles"—inasmuch as this might be said of men of Jewish no less than of Gentile birth. Doubtless these epistles are good for all Gentile readers of every age; but their internal indications suggest their original adaptation to Jews.

For the provinces named here as their residence, see Introduction, p. 367.

In the words: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," the difficulties pertain to theology rather than to interpretation. The sense of the words is very obvious so far as the province of interpretation extends. They imply that election is according to God's foreknowledge. This interprets their proper meaning. It remains for the theologian to inquire whether we can ascertain *how* God foreknows the free moral activities of men; how the fact that he does can be harmonized with man's freedom; also, whether he must be supposed to elect men according to his foreknowledge of what they will do *without* his own working in them morally, or *with* and *under* this spiritual inworking, etc. In other words, does his election hinge upon his foreknowing things as they are, or things as they are not? Things as they are means a world of free and morally responsible agents with whose freedom God never interferes but always honors and recognizes it; means a system of spiritual agencies from God working toward the salvation of men, which agencies of the Spirit, some men resist to their own ruin. The foreknowledge therefore upon which election turns is not foreknowing what men would do if there were no Holy Ghost, or what they would do if his influences were withheld; but it is rather foreknowing what men will do under the truth as impressed by the Spirit. Hence we can readily appreciate the supreme, unparalleled wisdom of the exhortation: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, *for* it is God who worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2: 12, 13).

It can scarcely be deemed in place here to discuss the theological bearings of this great problem further.

Let it be carefully noted that this election is carried into effect in and by sanctification wrought by the Spirit; and that it works toward and unto obedience—an obedient and loving heart, cleansed spiritually through sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. This last phrase has the key to its true sense in the Mosaic sacrificial system, in which blood-sprinklings were frequent, and were ceremonially cleansing. Translated into their gospel significance, they have their fulfillment; (*a*) In the aton-

ing blood of Christ availing for the sinner's pardon:—(*b*) In the moral and spiritual power of his death, made effective through the Holy Ghost unto a new and holy life.

To his Christian readers thus far described, he extends his benedictions—"Grace and peace be multiplied;" "grace" denoting specially the gifts and powers of the Holy Ghost; and "peace," their spiritual fruits and results.

3. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

5. Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

The thought of so great mercy from God may well inspire such a doxology. Let every heart unite in ascribing all blessing and praise to God even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! Think what He has done! In his great mercy, He has begotten us anew unto a living hope—a hope full of life-power, this being done especially by his raising up Christ from the dead; for this act sealed and crowned his gospel mission, and should therefore be taken as the Father's attestation and indorsement of Christ's entire redemptive work.

The great thought of what renewing grace achieves is still carried forward in v. 4.——Christians being new-born unto a living, most inspiring hope, which looks toward an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, unfading—these points being in strong contrast with all inheritances of mere earthly sort which perish with the using; are often defiled with the fraud and crime by which they are gotten, and the best of which must soon fade utterly away, as blossoms wither in one brief summer day.——For safe-keeping this inheritance is stored in heaven.——For *whom?* Returning again to this point, he adds—For you who are kept as in a walled city under the protecting power of God, working through your faith unto a salvation already prepared fully for its revelation in the last time. The Greek participle translated "kept" carries in itself the full significance I have given it—kept as in a high tower, or within the strong walls of a city. The writer's thought may have been upon that grand illustration current in the olden times:—"The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe" (Prov. 18: 10). Before Solomon wrote these words, David had made the figure familiar, as in his song of triumph over all his enemies (Ps. 18: 2): "The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my *high tower*." So also in Ps. 144: 2. Thus have the joyful experiences of God's people all along the ancient ages crystallized into these grand

military figures—God, their perfect and everlasting refuge, the high tower within whose lofty walls they are forever safe. Or with a wider range of illustrations "their dwelling-place through all generations," their home and sanctuary.——What want in human souls does he not supply, against what perils and dangers is not his name a pledge of safety forever!——Other cases of the New Testament usage of this Greek word for "kept," "keep," may be seen in 2 Cor. 11: 32: "The governor *kept* the city with a garrison." Gal. 3: 23: "Before faith came, we were *kept* under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." Phil. 4: 7: "The peace of God which passeth all understanding shall *keep* your heart and mind through Christ Jesus."

6. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

7. That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

In which ye exult—*leap for joy*—the Greek has it—despite of present brief, unavoidable sorrow under manifold trials. The word translated "temptations" is better put, trials, including those fears, dangers, tortures, loss of property or even life which came through violent persecution. All this might, for the brief present, abate from the exuberance of their Christian joy. But God had wise ends to answer by means of afflictions, even such as these—that their tried, proved faith, more precious than the most refined gold, might be found unto praise, honor, and glory when Christ should appear. Observe here, it is their *tried faith* rather than precisely the *trial* itself which is compared with the best refined gold, such gold being by nature perishable though never so thoroughly purified. But Christian faith wrought into the very character itself and purified by manifold trials, endures, with no decay, forever; shines out only the more brightly as the ages roll on. Good character lives in its own vitality and lives forever. The everlasting God will foster it, and enjoy it, may we not say, be proud of its beauty and rejoice in its surpassing glory!

"Found unto praise and glory"—yet we ought to ask—unto *whose* praise; unto *whose* glory? The answer must be—primarily to the praise and glory of Jesus who thus proves and purifies the souls of his people. This is the richest and best possible result, that his name should have the honor of this redemptive, morally cleansing work which brings out moral qualities of purity and beauty so far outshining gold though seven times purified. Yet what turns primarily to the glory and praise of their Re-

deemer is in its indirect and remote bearings inexpressibly blissful to them as well. Nothing could be more so.

8. Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

9. Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

It might be assumed that none of Peter's contemplated readers had ever seen Jesus in the flesh. Yet they loved him. Not now seeing him, but yet believing, ye (so he addresses them) rejoice, exulting with such joy as no words can express—a joy all-glorious!——Not seeing *now*, tacitly assumes that they will see him in the heavenly life, but a little way in the future.—— In the words, "receiving the end of your faith," the Greek, like our English, has the present participle. Does Peter use the present for the future because he thinks of it as so very near; or is his thought upon the foretastes of heaven that enrich the soul even here and guaranty the bliss to come by giving some forestallments of it in advance? Or (as the case may be) the present may indicate the simple certainty of the blessed result. They might feel that it is even now within their grasp. They are in a very vital sense saved already.

This passage is richly suggestive, thus: (1.) That love to Christ may exist in its best purity, and may reach a very high development, through *faith alone*, with no aid from the sense of sight. Faith accepts the record of all Jesus said and did; welcomes the testimony that comes from his tears and from his blood shed for sin; sees in all this a personal Savior offering himself to be trusted, loved, obeyed; and what need we more? We might almost say—What could the sight of the eye add to all this? With any amount of eye-vision, we should still need the words and the deeds, the promises and the invitations, the manifested sympathy and the assurances of his undying love; these elements upon which our faith takes hold we should still need as an intelligent basis for our personal trust in him to become our Savior. (2.) The passage therefore suggests what we may put as a special point, viz., that Christ's spoken words and recorded deeds provide an ample and solid foundation for intelligent faith and for the utmost depth and purity of love.

(3). Inasmuch as almost the entire body of Christ's saved people are shut up in the present world to such faith as can be attained without the aid of sight, it is the divine policy to honor such faith and to give it special reward. This seems to be the implied sense of Christ's words to Thomas (John 20: 29): "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed [*more* blessed] are they that have not seen me and yet have believed." *More* blessed than these Jesus must be understood to imply. Their faith is a higher virtue, a nobler testimony to God's veracity

and therefore more grateful to his heart. It is one of the lofty purposes of our present earthly discipline to cherish and develop this pure, unfaltering faith in God which simply trusts his word and reposes upon it, though these mortal eyes have as yet seen nothing.

(4). Christians are in perpetual danger of over-estimating the value of the personal vision of Christ in this world of flesh and sense; while on the other hand, they are prone to under-estimate the value of that simple faith which rests on his recorded words and deeds, and seeks through the gift of the Spirit those inspiring realizations of unseen things which Jesus promised in the words; "He shall guide you into all truth"; "He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you" (John 16: 13–15). Those who long so intensely for his visible coming to-day—if really their thought is upon it as a richer means of grace and a source of higher Christian purity and joy —should ask themselves if these longings are not outside of God's plan—a scheme of their own hearts' devising—in which they disparage faith by their passionate demands for what is in truth only of sense.

Of the joys of believing, described here as unutterable in words and all-glorious, what shall we say?—First, that they are to a certain extent present joys—not merely future; at least, they are so thought of here. As the believing without seeing is now, so are the joys of such believing.——Again, it must not be denied that they are in part joys of hope—the joyous anticipation of future blessedness. The context leads the mind to this: "The end of your faith, the salvation of your souls."——But by far the most vital point to be noticed is that the chief and best of these joys of believing do not terminate upon one's self, but rather upon Jesus. They are joy in what he is, is doing, is to do —rather than in what we are to have from him. It is possible to human nature to have thoughts of heaven and joys in the anticipation of heaven that should have no better name than selfish. It would be an egregious abuse of language to call those selfish joys "unspeakable and full of glory." Selfishness never rises to any such exalted heights of blessedness.——Over against these, and all unlike them, are joys that terminate in Christ;—the joys of becoming acquainted with such a character; the deep and uplifting admiration of its purity and excellence; the quiet but solid bliss that comes of entering into sympathy with Christ in his loving activities and self-sacrifices; a sense of being at one with him in that which makes his work the bliss of heaven, the glorious joy of all the good. Add to this the sense that Jesus is all in all, and our little selves virtually nothing; also the vast and ever-growing conception of the myriad masses that are blessed in him and are to be forever—the heart entering by sympathy into the joy of those masses of intelligent existence as they are seen lifted to higher and yet higher planes of thought and purity of love—each redeemed one sweetly conscious that the joy of every

saint is also his own, so that he shall find his own blessedness rising and swelling forever as he drinks in and makes his own all this ocean of blessedness of which Jesus is the eternal Fountain.——All this lifts one above and bears him away from the miserable selfishness that dwarfs and blights all real joy, and interprets to us what it must be to have the eternal God our Portion and to inherit Him through Jesus as his own accepted children.——If there be difficulty in gaining a definite sense of these joys of believing in Jesus, it must be put to the account of very imperfect conceptions of the heavenly blessedness. When "the pure in heart shall see God"; when "those that hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled"; when "we shall be satisfied, awaking in his likeness"; when we "shall see Jesus as he is"; —then we shall be able to estimate and measure these joys of believing that are indeed "unspeakable and full of glory."

10. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you:

11. Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

12. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

In respect to which salvation, the prophets inquired and searched most diligently (both verbs being made very intensive), who prophesied of the gospel grace destined for you;—the two definite points of this search being (*a*) "*what time*" and (*b*) *what sort of a time, i. e.*, what time chronologically; and marked by what events—known by what characteristics—historically.

The time chronologically was given with greatest precision through Daniel (9: 24): Seventy sevens of years, equal to four hundred and ninety, measured the time then intervening. The time was indicated to Daniel in a more general way as following the fall of the great powers, mostly hostile to Israel, the Messiah's kingdom—beginning with his inauguration upon his ascension to heaven—becoming thus the fifth kingdom, to stand forever.—— To Jacob (Gen. 49: 10) the Messiah, under the name Shiloh (Prince of Peace) was foretold as to come before the scepter had entirely dropped from the hand of her earthly kings: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah . . . till Shiloh come; him shall the nations obey."——So much as to the first point—the *time when*, chronologically.

As to the second point—the historical characteristics of the

time—prophecy gave his birthplace, Bethlehem (Micah 5: 2): indicated in many distinct prophecies his humble (not magnificent) origin; his birth in David's line genealogically, and of a virgin mother (Isaiah 7: 14); saying moreover (Deut. 32: 43): "When he bringeth his first-begotten into the world, let all the angels of God worship him."——These are specimens, not exhaustive, of the attendant incidents which denoted "*what manner of time*" the spirit of prophecy foreindicated as to the Great Messiah.

"The spirit of Christ in them" was making known, foreshowing, "the sufferings of Christ and the glories that followed" closely after. Was making known—the tense itself denoting continuous action, for these prophecies were consecutive and long continued. The two main points of chief interest were the sufferings that should come upon Christ, as we may read in Isaiah 53, and the glories (plural) that should ensue as his reward, referring to his resurrection, ascension, enthronement in the highest heavens at the right hand of the Father, and the gift of the nations as his inheritance. These points we may find in Psalms 16; 110: 2, in Isaiah also, and elsewhere.

To them it was revealed that not for themselves but for you were they ministering as revealing prophets the things now announced to you by those who preach to you the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. The great events of the gospel history thrilled the souls of the old prophets, though seen but dimly. The salvation of which those events testified sent back its blessings to those ancient saints as well as forward to these after ages. Yet in the sense of the *time* of their full manifestation, it was not for them, but for the men of Peter's generation.

Having spoken thus fully of the thrilling interest and profound study of the old prophets in this gospel, Peter adds that this same theme was also a profound study to the angels. They, too, long to search into these things. His Greek verb signifies that they press up very close and push their inquiries most earnestly. Indeed, by etymology the verb seems to denote bending down over an object for the purpose of more close and thorough examination.

These are the unfallen angels. They have no experience of sin; they have never felt a conscious sense of its vileness, have never tasted its woes; but some idea of its guilt and ruin they unquestionably have, and their sympathies are stirred deeply toward this wonderful scheme of human redemption. They know something of Jesus; for when the Lord of heaven brought his first-begotten into the world, he said, "Let all the angels of God worship him;" and "suddenly there was with the revealing angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest heavens; on earth, peace; good-will to men."

13. Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

14. As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

15. But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

16. Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

"Girding up the loins" comes from the oriental modes of dress, and signifies to prepare for the utmost activity of labor. Here it is the loins of the mind—mind as the instrument of thought, knowledge.——"Be sober," in the sense of temperate, retaining the full possession and control of your powers, always in readiness for the most vigorous activities. Keep your mind and heart in order for most effective service. And hope *perfectly*—not as our English would suggest, all the way through life; but rather, hope with no faltering of fear or doubt; let your hope be entire, perfect. Perfect is the legitimate sense of the original.——"For the grace to be borne unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." This must refer to his future and final coming, at which event the grace destined for them would reach its full consummation. ——As children thoroughly obedient to the manifested will of God. "Fashioning themselves" assumed a power of self-shaping and culture, for the right use of which they are eminently responsible. They can form their own habits, can determine their own activities, and so can mold their own personal character. Hence the pertinence of this grand exhortation that this self-culture should not shape their life and character according to their old lusts when they knew no better, but according to the perfect model of the Heavenly One who had called them. As he was spotless in holiness, so let them become holy in all their life, in all their activities.——Become rather than *be*, is the sense of the Greek. "Manner of conversation" is a very infelicitous translation for our age, the word "conversation" having quite lost its old sense, the habitudes of one's life, and come to mean merely speech—speaking one to another in social communion.

"It is written," seems to refer to the words of Christ (Matt. 5: 48): "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." The words occur, however, more exactly in the Old Testament (Lev. 11: 44, 45, and 19: 2, and 20: 7, 26). Such an example, so high, so pure, so glorious—how should it inspire God's children! How should they honor their parentage and meet the responsibilities of children made in the very image of their Great Father, so that by virtue of their original creation and by their being new-born to God, they become in every respect capable of conforming their personal character and life to his pure holiness!

17. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear.

"If ye call on the Father," suggests the responsibility involved

in prayer. If ye avail yourselves of your privilege of saying, "Our Father;" if ye professedly, avowedly, come to him as children, and take his name upon you as your Father, then be ye very honest before such a God! For he will look upon the heart! Those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth. Never will his eye be dazzled with the mere external display. With him is no regard to outside appearances. He judges every man by his doings. Take care then that ye fill out the time of your earthly sojourn in reverential fear. The verb translated "pass the time," suggests the constant activities of life—the perpetual turning round and round in all active thought and work.

18. Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers;

19. But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

Do all this, knowing, under a vivid sense of the truth, that ye were not redeemed with perishable treasure, like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a spotless, stainless, lamb.——"Redeemed" is here in its primary sense, bought off, ransomed as captives in war, or slaves bought into freedom. In this case, redeemed from your vain, fruitless, ruinous course of life—which had come down by tradition from the fathers. Those giant powers of example and education are thought of which hold the myriads of our race under the bonds of traditionary notions, principles, and habits, so that generation after generation, children follow blindly and with almost never a deviation, the course of life led by their fathers before them. But, he would say, in your case God has interposed with redemption through Jesus to break those bonds and to set the captives free.——The precious blood of Christ as of a spotless lamb has the levitical lamb of sacrifice for its symbol, but Jesus, the gospel lamb of sacrifice, for its reality.

20. Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

21. Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

"Foreknown" is the primary sense of the Greek verb; yet by implication, foredetermined becomes the real sense; for simply to foreknow without foredetermining would in this case be simply inoperative and of no effect—it being a thing for God—not man—to do. Before the world was made, this divine Redeemer was fully in the thought and plan of God, but not made known until these last times, and now for your sakes who by him are faithful toward God who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope become truly in and toward God.——

The reading of the oldest manuscripts, approved by the best critics, is not—"do believe in God," but, *are* faithful (pistous, πιστους) maintaining the moral attitude of believing trust. Great stress is laid upon the decisive fact that God raised Jesus from the dead as conclusive proof that his heart and hand are in this scheme of salvation; that he honors Jesus as his own Son; makes him our Great High Priest; fully indorses his redemptive work; enthrones him king in his mediatorial kingdom. Thus your faith and hope come to rest in God.

22. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently:

23. Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.

The form of the expression—"Having purified your souls by obeying the truth unto unhypocritical love of the brethren"—suggests that they have, yet suggests it in such a way as amounts to a tacit exhortation to do so if not done already.——The three oldest manuscripts concur in omitting the words—"through the Spirit." This fact seems to indicate that these words were inserted subsequently as an explanation or comment.——The exhortation follows;—Love one another from the heart fervently. The better text omits "pure" before "heart."——Being newborn, not of corruptible but of incorruptible seed, viz., by the living, abiding word of God. The adjectives "living," "abiding," should apply to "word," not to "God." So the context (v. 25) demands; while the order of the words in themselves favors this construction. The permanent character of the divine word is the thought made prominent here. This enduring, changeless word of God, his revealed truth, had been made the instrument under God in their new birth. Therefore, let them prize it, hold it fast among their imperishable treasures.

24. For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

25. But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

This passage is from Isa. 40: 6–8, with only slight variations, not affecting the sense. There, the word of God thought of was his great word of gospel promise: here, this word of promise is performed, fulfilled—the very gospel preached (says Peter) unto you. Isaiah thought of that word of gospel promise as profoundly sure. Set for comparison beside the most beauteous things in nature, or the most precious results of human thought, it would stand unchanged and its glory be forever unfading; while all flesh is like grass and its best things like the fading

flower. Therefore let the saints of God hold their gospel word in highest honor, cherish it as everlasting truth, and make it the man of their counsel through all generations.

CHAPTER II.

Carrying out his thought as to this enduring gospel word and applying it broadly to practical Christian life, he exhorts to the putting away of all sin (v. 1); to self-nutrition upon the pure milk of truth (2); if really they have experienced the great grace of the Lord (3); then presents Jesus, according to one of the Old Testament figures, as a living stone, exalted to the place of chief honor in God's great temple: they too are to become living stones in this spiritual temple (4, 5)—a point further illustrated from certain Old Testament Scriptures in its application both to those who believe and to those who do not (6–8); the honored destiny of believers yet more fully set forth (9, 10); which should inspire them to the utmost vigilance against sin and unto holiness (11, 12). These principles are applied to their Christian duties as citizens (13–17); as servants (18–20); and enforced by the example of Christ (21–23) whose sacrificial sufferings for the salvation of his people should press them forward mightily in a holy life (24, 25).

1. Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

2. As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

3. If so be ye have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious.

"Wherefore" looks back logically to their being new-born to God by his immortal word, whose pertinence and power endure forever. Having been so new-born, let them expel from their heart and life all these sins—of which a long catalogue is named; —malice, guile, hypocrisies, envyings, all evil speakings—various forms of sin that have their roots in selfishness, in unhallowed self-seeking and reckless undervaluing of others' interests and rights. Every thing in this list is in utter repugnance to the love of one's neighbor which the gospel spirit and law demand. They all contemplate man in social life; are the sins to which the selfish soul is tempted in its social relations.——As to all these sins, let them consider themselves as babes beginning a new life, utterly unlike the old. Like new-born babes let them earnestly desire, intensely long for, the pure milk of gospel truth, such as adapts itself to the spiritual development of God's children from

infancy upward, that by it they may grow unto salvation—these words, "unto salvation," being an improvement in the original text brought out by the older manuscripts. Growth in a holy heart and life is growth toward and unto salvation.——If indeed ye have learned in your experience that the Lord is gracious—*i. e.*, good, kind, rich in spiritual blessings. Peter assumes that as souls new-born to God, they must have experienced this sweet sense of the Lord's love. Therefore, let this experience inspire them to holy aspiration and endeavor, but especially to seek food for their souls in the pure truths of God's word—those truths being adapted to rational minds and to souls new-born to the love and service of God.

4. To whom coming *as unto* a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious,

5. Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

It is certainly supposable that the figure which conceives of Christ as a chief corner-stone in God's temple and his people also as living stones built into that temple, may have had special interest to Peter as he remembered the name Jesus gave him at their first introduction (John 1: 42): "Thou art Simon; thou shalt be called Cephas"—meaning in Aramean, a stone, to which Petros in Greek corresponds. Another play upon his name appears in Matt. 16: 18: "Thou art Peter [rock], and upon this rock I will build my church," etc.——But whether or not the significance of his own name lent interest to this figure, no one can doubt that he had in mind such Old Testament passages as we find Ps. 118: 22; "The stone which the builders refused is become the head-stone of the corner"; and Isa. 28: 16: "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste." Moreover, he may have been familiar with the words of his "beloved brother Paul" (as in Eph. 2: 19–22): "Ye are of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."——The central thoughts here are—a spiritual temple, Jesus the chief corner-stone; his people also stones built into this holy temple for purposes of spiritual sacrifice, worship, service unto God. Accessory points worthy of note are—that Jesus is a *living* stone, not a dead one; not a mere geological rock; that his people also are living stones—living better than "lively," which in the sense here, has become obsolete. The Greek has the same word for Christ's people as for himself—both "*living* stones." That Jesus had been "disallowed," disowned and refused of men, but chosen and precious before God, is also a prominent point in the general illustration.

6. Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

7. Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,

8. And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

9. But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:

10. Which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

In the first words of v. 6, the improved reading has "*dioti*" instead of "*dio kai*," and requires the sense *Because* instead of *Wherefore.* Because confirms what is said before by the citations that follow; which is the true sense. "Wherefore" would assume that what follows depends on what prcedes and ought to be because the things previously stated were facts. This would reverse the logical order of the two clauses.——The quotation in v. 6 is abbreviated from Isa. 28: 16—quoted above.——"Be confounded" means put to shame by cruel disappointment in his faith and hope.

In the first clause of v. 7 the translation—"he is precious" should be set aside, to give place to a better—because though a truth and a noble one, it is probably not *the* truth which Peter intended to express here. The Greek gives us nothing which signifies "*he.*" The word for "precious" is the abstract noun "time" (τιμή) honor, with the article—*the honor.* In the connection, translate thus: "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner-stone, choice, honorable; and whoever believeth in him shall not be put to shame." Therefore, to you believers is the honor [not the shame]; but as to the unbelieving, the stone which the builders rejected has become the head-stone of the corner, and a stone to stumble over—a rock to strike against, for those who stumble, disobeying the word—to which issue, they were appointed. "But ye are a chosen generation," etc., exalted to the high honor of being God's chosen people. The antithesis is: No believer in Christ ever put to shame; to all such is real and high honor.

But over against this, when unbelievers refused this stone, God, —following his own wisdom, not theirs,—made it his chief corner-stone, and left it for them to stumble over since so they would. Still repeating the main points, he proceeds (v. 9): "Ye are exalted to highest honor" [this shows the drift of thought in the beginning of v. 7]; "ye are a chosen generation, a priesthood of kings"

(as in Exod. 19: 6): "a holy nation, a people acquired of God to be his personal property" [so the original signifies]. The old Latin, peculium, was the name for one's personal property. In this sense our translators used the word "peculiar"—a people claimed and held of God as his own property.——That ye may set forth the virtues, merits [aretas] of Him who hath called you out of darkness (the darkness of heathenism) into his wonderful light; who being once not a people (of any account) are now the people of God; once not treated with compassion, but now ye are.

The reader will notice that in v. 8, instead of translating—"stumble at the word, being disobedient," I have it—"who stumble, disobeying the word." Their unbelief of the word was the cause of their stumbling over that chief corner-stone to their destruction. To this stumbling and fall, their unbelief destined, doomed them hopelessly. There can be no help for men who will not have the help for salvation provided for them in God's own Son.

11. Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul:

12. Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

"Strangers and pilgrims," here means something more and other than Jews living in Pontus rather than Judea. It means —men of another and better country, merely staying for a little time in this foreign land, not their home. It is as citizens of the heavenly world rather than as men whose home and treasure and interests are of this world, that he addresses them here. As such, let them abstain—hold themselves by positive self-control aloof from those lusts of the flesh which war against the soul—always antagonistic to the soul's true interests—which (as Bengel says) "not only hinder but attack." Alas, that men who would fight a foreign enemy to the death should nurse an indwelling foe to their ensnarement and ruin. How little they realize that these lusts of the flesh are fatally hostile to the soul!

Let them maintain an honorable, upright course of life among the Gentiles that in what point soever [not "whereas," but wherein] they speak against you as evil-doers, they may, by reason of your works which they see, glorify God in the day of visitation. The form of Peter's expression is quite unique. Instead of saying, beholding your good works, they shall glorify God (as we might expect), he says, From (or *out of*) the good works [ek] they, beholding, shall glorify God, etc. The enforced conviction which compels them to glorify God comes forth out of Christian good works, when men can not but see them.

But why does he say, "In the day of their visitation?"——The New Testament usage of this phrase appears in Luke 19: 44, in a good sense—*i. e.*, the day when God comes near in mercy, and when solemn convictions of truth press on human souls. In the

present case such convictions are suggested by the holy lives of God's people. Peter thinks of those hallowed moments when blameless Christian lives enforce conviction upon the ungodly and God comes near for their salvation.

13. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;

14. Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well.

Those special duties growing out of various social and civil relations fall under the broad sense of the word "conversation" (v. 12), which, as we often have occasion to repeat, is by no means talk, but is life—the whole course of one's activities; all the words and deeds that make up human life in this social world. The writer now proceeds to expand them in more full detail. "Submit to every ordinance of man;" but this is not an "ordinance" in the sense of a law or statute, but rather an *institution*, an organized civil government or authority. Literally his words run: To every creation of man—*i. e.*, in the line of civil authority, as his specifications show; to the king as one over all; to governors (his subordinate officers) as to men sent forth by him for the punishment of evil-doers and for the praise (reward) of well-doers. This he exhorts them to do "for the Lord's sake." For conscience toward God, let them render obedience to the civil government of the country in which they sojourned, nor think to excuse themselves because they owed a higher allegiance to God. Jesus and Paul never failed to inculcate this doctrine, and to observe it in their life.

15. For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

16. As free, and not using *your* liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

Still expanding this thought, he urges: This is duty to God, for it is his will that by well-doing, his people should muzzle the mouths of senseless men; but Peter expresses himself with singular felicity. Having used the Greek verb for muzzle as if he would say the mouth, he puts the object of his verb, not mouth, but ignorance—that by well-doing ye may shut up and silence the ignorance of senseless men.

"As free." Free from what? Free in what sense?——On this point vagueness of idea is common; error not infrequent. Yet the correct view is exceedingly vital.

Notice, therefore, in the outset, Peter assumes that this freedom of which he speaks is a reality, not a dream or an illusion; that it may be abused as a cover and apology for sin, yet ought not to be; and that it is consistent with being the real servants of God. ——Bearing these points in mind, let us first eliminate some of the possible, perhaps actual errors, and say negatively:

(1.) Peter does not mean *free* in the sense of being exempt from the ritual, burdensome requisitions of the old ceremonial law. Nothing in the context nor in these epistles looks that way.

Nor (2) *free* as opposed to a state of personal slavery. The context (below v. 18) shows that some of his contemplated readers were servants, apparently in the sense of slaves.

Nor (3) free in the sense of having no rights, and hence no obligations, of citizenship. This might be thought supposable, since, being in a foreign country, they were aliens rather than citizens, and therefore might think themselves exempt from the obligations of citizenship. Yet I can not think that the morality of the gospel ever favored such a notion of license or exemption from legitimate obedience to civil law.

Nor (4) did he mean free, in the ideal, possibly supposable sense that in becoming a Christian, one ceases to be a subject of civil government—*i. e.*, that the moment he recognizes his allegiance to the true God, all his allegiance to human government becomes null and void. This doctrine is more than dangerous; it is positively pernicious:—is more than questionable theoretically, for it is certainly and terribly false. Neither Jesus nor his apostles ever gave it the least sanction.

(5.) And yet again, he did not mean "free" in the metaphysical sense of the freedom of the human will. In this sense it might be very true that they were free; but so also were all other men no less. This freedom, therefore, was no peculiarity of theirs, and is not relevant here.

On the positive side, our guiding thread to the true sense must be sought in the discussions had between Jesus and the Jews of his time, as in John 8: 32–36—a discussion which Peter's Jewish readers could not well ignore or overlook. Jesus said to certain Jews who believed on him: "If ye continue in my words, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." They answered him: "We be Abraham's seed and were never in bondage to any man. How sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?" "Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." The central idea is: He is the free man whom the truth makes free. Error and delusion, admitted into human souls and loved, bring them into bondage. So Peter himself taught (2 Pet. 2: 19): "While they (the false teachers) promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants [slaves] of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into bondage." Consequently the light and the love of truth, honestly welcomed and obeyed, brings to man the highest freedom he can know. It does not make him independent of God; he needs no such independence to be supremely blessed. Perfect obedience to God's will is his supreme wisdom, and brings with it a sense of freedom from all bondage such as is base, galling, enslaving; in short, it makes him *free* in the very highest sense in which a finite being can be

free.——Of this freedom Peter might well say: Take care to not abuse it as a shield, cover, apology, for maliciousness; but remember that ye are servants of God. Higher honor than this service, ye never need crave; ye never can have.

17. Honor all *men.* Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

The terseness and strength of these precepts are admirable. Easily remembered, they are also full of sense and wisdom, pregnant with the highest elements of Christian morality. They are also pertinent to his line of thought in this connection:—Be not so elated with your noble freedom as the sons of the Lord Almighty that ye can look down contemptuously upon men less honored of God; but see that ye accord due honor and deference to all men, especially to men bearing the responsibilities of civil authority.——Love the brotherhood, as behooves children of the same royal family. Reverence God. Honor the king, for kings hold civil authority under God. This is the doctrine of apostolic Christianity. (See Paul, Rom. 13.)

18. Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.

19. For this *is* thank-worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

20. For what glory *is it,* if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it,* ye take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God.

From this verse onward to 3: 7, the apostle gives specific instructions to special classes; first, to servants. In their case the first duty would be submissiveness. By civil authority they were under control. Their wisdom and Christian duty lay in bowing to the force of circumstances, accepting their lot as, though hard, yet permitted under divine providence. In their sphere they might adorn the gospel and might please God—both being objects worthy of their supreme endeavor—worthy of their immortal nature.——But from the fact that submission under slavery became a Christian duty, let no one leap to the conclusion that God purposely indorsed slavery with his approbation. For this sort of argument would prove that he pre-eminently approved the way of the "froward"—the crooked (as the word means)—the crabbed, savage, ugly, tyrannical master; for submission to such is represented as peculiarly acceptable to God! Especially if their course was utterly unjust, and the servant had done nothing wrong to provoke it.

This is the point chiefly urged by the apostle: Let the Christian servant learn to endure the utmost abuse with never-flagging patience. Let it be his glory to suffer wrong. Let him make it

a point of conscience toward God, not because he assumes that God approves the tyranny and wrong under which he suffers; but because this is the lot to which, under the force of circumstances beyond his control, he is subjected, and in this lot his duty to God lies in quiet, unresisting submission and patient endurance. So suffering wrong, his reward shall be of God. The vengeance, the retribution due to his cruel, guilty master, he may leave—where all vengeance should be left—to God alone. (See Rom. 12: 19.)

21. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

22. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

23. Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously:

Called to become Christians—followers of Christ—this calling, by the force of Christ's example, carried with it all this patient endurance of inflicted wrong because Christ also suffered for you (so the better text *you* instead of "us"), leaving to you an example that ye should follow his steps—follow close upon and after his steps[2]—as the original signifies.

"Who did no sin" in deed or in word—special emphasis lying here upon his spoken words. Being reviled, he never reviled back in reply; under suffering, never threatened, although legions of angels were at his command, ready to apply their overwhelming powers for his defense. But Jesus meekly committed himself to the great God who judges righteously,—in this, making himself a glorious example for all his suffering, wronged, oppressed children.

24. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

25. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

In developing Christ's sufferings, Peter bears his readers onward to that last and chief hour of terrible suffering, endured for us, when he bore our sins in his own body on the cross—Peter's object being specially to bring out the moral bearing of that suffering death as a motive power unto a holy life—to the end that being dead to sin, we might live unto righteousness.——In this phrase, the sense "being *dead*," comes from the Greek word rather by implication than as belonging to the word legitimately. The word signifies—having become free from sin; coming into a state of entire separation from it. Then follows the further duty—that of living unto righteousness; making this the one

supreme end of their life.——By whose stripe ye have healing. The wound upon him brings healing to you. So mysteriously wonderful are God's ways of redemption through the cross of his Son!——For ye were wanderers like sheep; but ye have now returned to the one Shepherd and Bishop of your souls who keeps the fold, who laid down his life for his sheep; but now lives forever, their Shepherd, their loving Friend and Savior.

CHAPTER III.

Continuing his instructions to special classes, he addresses wives (1–6); husbands (7); then all classes with general exhortations as to their spirit (8, 9) and conduct (10, 11); enforcing all by the thought of a present God who discriminates for the good and against the evil (12, 13). To suffer for righteousness—blessed (14). Be ever ready to give meekly the ground of your gospel hope (15), with a good conscience and an upright life, confounding opposers (16); suffering for well doing and not for ill (17); all which is enforced by the high example of Christ, of which very broad and comprehensive views are taken (18–20). The allusion to the deluge suggests baptism, from which he passes on to the resurrection, ascension and supreme exaltation of Jesus in heaven (21, 22).

1. Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

2. While they behold your chaste conversation *coupled* with fear.

At the head of specific directions to wives, he places subjection to their husbands, which as he subsequently explains it, he would not have servile, but respectful (v. 2, 6). Assuming that in many cases these husbands might be unbelievers, not persuaded to faith and obedience in respect to the divine word, he suggests that without the word they may be won over by the godly life of their wives as they behold from day to day their pure and respectful deportment.——Here as everywhere in the Scriptures, the word "conversation" signifies, not talk merely, by any means, but the entire life and spirit.——"With fear" should not be pressed farther than a modest, respectful bearing. Christianity never asks of the wife the spirit of servile, slavish fear. It peremptorily forbids the husband to excite fear of that sort.

3. Whose adorning, let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

4. But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price,

Instruction to wives as to practical life can not omit the adornment of the person. Ever since human nature has been in the world, adorning the person has been a strong passion in the female sex, due in part (its better part) to a love of the beautiful; in part to their relation to the other sex. The noticeable thing here is the delicate discretion and great wisdom of Peter in laboring to regulate and curb this passion "by the expulsive power of a higher affection." He does not decry beauty; would not, by any means, go against adornment, but says—Let it not be first and chiefly, of the outer person, but rather, of the inner soul. The soul takes on a polish that never wears off—a beauty that never fades, a deep and enduring adornment which even God holds in high esteem. The adorning he would *not* have is described in quite plain terms—braided hair, wearing gold jewelry, apparel put on in keeping with the other specifications; for we can not suppose that he discards clothing altogether. He condemns only apparel of such quality and so put on as to class itself with plaited hair and jewelry.——The adorning recommended is that of a meek and quiet spirit. Meekness belongs to the affections; quietness to the deportment. The meek woman is gentle in spirit; the quiet is self-controlled in manner.——It is a marvelously telling and forceful consideration (for all who can and will appreciate it) that such adorning is held at a high price before God!

The following translation of these verses is suggested as being true to the original: "Whose adorning—let it not be of the outside—braided hair; gold put on; raiment worn; but the inner manhood of the heart, the imperishable beauty of the meek and quiet spirit which in God's sight is very precious."

5. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

6. Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

To his Jewish sisters who not only received but held in high esteem the Old Testament history, it was very pertinent to enforce his exhortation by an appeal to the example of Sarah (Gen. 18: 12). The spirit of Sarah was not always unexceptionable; but the name "lord" used of her husband, recognized her subjection, while at the same time her respect and deference for him fell

very noticeably short of "amazement," *i. e.*, trepidation, terror, as the Greek word signifies. Her example was good both for the quality of her fear, and for its quantity. It was a deferential respect; it was not an unwomanly and unwifely servility, amounting to amazement, terror.

7. Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

In this verse our English translation fails to represent the original in respect to the grammatical relation of the several clauses. Peter meant to say—dwelling according to your better knowledge with the wife as the weaker vessel; giving honor to wives as fellow-heirs of the grace of life. The husband is assumed to have better knowledge, the opportunities of men for culture being much superior to those of women.——It is supposed to be in imitation of the later Hebrew usage that the wife is spoken of as a "vessel." (See the same usage in 1 Thess. 4: 4.) It deserves special notice that Christianity recognizes the full and true humanity of woman by representing her as a fellow-heir of immortal life and of all its blessings. This recognition lifts her at once from the low plane of a mere animal, provided for the convenience of the lords of creation. No less immortal than the ruling sex; no less honored of God in the provisions for her salvation; in all the most vital qualities and high responsibilities of human nature, she falls no whit below her father, husband, sons. ——The motive which urges the husband to live with his wife according to his better knowledge and to accord her due honor as to one equally with himself an heir to immortal blessedness, is that "their prayers be not hindered"—so obstructed as never to reach the ear of God, and of course never to avail any thing as prayer. Let them see to it that all the kindly and precious relations of husband and wife be sustained according to their Christian knowledge and with all due honor to woman, as they would have the ear of God in their united prayers.

8. Finally, *be ye* all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, *be* pitiful, *be* courteous:

9. Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

The precept—"Be ye all of one mind," raises questions of real importance:—*e. g.*, whether it relates to opinions, or mainly if not only, to purposes and aims of Christian life. In the latter sense, all Christians should manifestly be one; for serving God is one thing in purpose and in aim, and one only. But as to opinions, views of truth in all minutest shades, how shall minds

working freely be always sure of forming the same opinions and reaching the same conclusions? Moreover, how far may we suppose that holding the same opinions in this sense is divinely enjoined? Christian brethren may doubtless very properly *aim* to think alike, and cultivate harmony of opinion; but yet the wiser regulation of free thought would seem to be to cultivate perfect candor; to avoid prejudice; to seek truth only; and to invoke and follow the guidance of the Spirit of truth. It is reasonable to assume, however, that the apostle's thought is not upon all minutest shades of opinion on trivial points, but rather upon the vital facts and truths of Christianity. In regard to these the injunction to be of the same mind has momentous reason underlying it, and does not conflict with legitimate freedom of human thought; for a true heart and a reasonably fair intellect insure all the unity of views that can be desired.——Be sympathetic; be lovers of the brethren; compassionate; and of humble spirit—this being the sense of the last Greek word as we have it in the improved text.*

Not rendering evil to others for evil done you by them, nor railing against railing—this word denoting reproachful language, harsh, fault-finding, scurrilous. Let not such words be retorted back, nor the spirit of them be indulged at all. But on the contrary, give even such men your blessing; express your good will in kindness and love.——Moreover, let the reason given for this precept be carefully noted; viz., because for this purpose were ye called (*i. e.* of God into his kingdom), that ye might inherit blessing. Men called by God to inherit blessings so exceedingly rich and so utterly undeserved should be very free to dispense their blessings of good-will and favor upon their fellow-men, evermore doing them all the good they can; manifesting every-where and to the basest and most abusive of men, the same loving, generous, forgiving spirit which God has so lavishly manifested toward them. Why not? If they have learned to appreciate how much undeserved mercy and blessing are worth to their own souls, why should they not impart to others somewhat of the same sunshine of love which has brought peace and joy into their own souls? Called to receive such blessings, let them feel that they, too, should have blessings to give, even to those who give them only evil and railing.——The corrected text omits "knowing." The sense does not require it.——On the contrary, express your hearty good-will ("blessing") because ye were called unto God to receive blessings.

10. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:

11. Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

* Not philophronos but tapeinophronos.

For let him who wills to love life (setting his heart strongly upon it), and to see good days, cease his tongue (*make* it cease) from evil, etc. Let him incline away from evil; lean powerfully against it; brace himself with his might against wrong-doing. ——"Peace," in the broad sense, good to men generally, all blessings. Manifestly Peter's thought follows those rich words of the Psalmist (Ps. 34: 12–16).

"What man *is he that* desireth life, *and* loveth *many* days, that he may see good?

"Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

"Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

"The eyes of the LORD *are* upon the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their cry.

"The face of the LORD *is* against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth."

12. For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord *is* against them that do evil.

The underlying doctrine here—one of exceedingly vital moment—is: If a man will only live so that he can pray acceptably, and will have all right between himself and God, he need be anxious for nothing. God's present love and mighty hand will make all well for him. What more or better can he need than the loving eye and almighty arm of God pledged in his behalf?

13. And who *is* he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

14. But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy *are ye:* and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

15. But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

16. Having a good conscience: that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

17. For *it is* better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing than for evil doing.

"Followers of that which is good;"—but the improved text gives us instead of "followers" the word *zealous;* if ye become earnestly zealous for the good—(zēlōtai).——Suffer for the sake of righteousness—for its cause and interests—the supposition being, moreover, that ye are personally righteous also. Then are ye blessed. Then, fear ye not their fear—the fear they would fain inspire; or, perhaps, fear ye not the things they have reason to fear. Nor be troubled by any threats from them.

"But sanctify the Lord Christ (instead of "God" in the better text) in your hearts." Let your heart be pure toward the Lord Jesus, aiming supremely to please him.——"The hope that is in you" must be the gospel hope, resting on its legitimate evidence. The supposition is that the questioners are unbelievers, and that they ask—Why do you receive Jesus of Nazareth as your Messiah and Savior? Be ready always to give an answer meekly (not proudly) and with due respect to the party who asks of you your reasons for this gospel hope.

"Having a good conscience," *i. e.*, maintaining, preserving it by carefully enlightening your mind as to duty and by scrupulously observing the decisions of your moral sense.——"That" *wherein* [not "whereas"]—but in all those particulars in which they reproach and revile your blameless Christian life, they may be put to shame. The supposition is that bad men revile this blameless life, and are therein put to shame.——"Conversation" here as ever in the broad sense—the whole Christian life.—— For if it be the will of God that ye should suffer, let it be for doing well; not for doing ill. The difference is all but infinite. To suffer for ill-doing is fearful; the doing of ill is of all things most to be deplored: but suffering for doing well is an evil of the least imaginable account; for in this case you are sure to have the infinite God on your side. Think, moreover, of the wonderful example of Jesus Christ in this respect—which I must now proceed to place before you.

18. For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

19. By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

20. Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

That this passage involves difficulties, no sensible critic will deny: that it has grave importance, all sensible readers will readily see. It would be unpardonable, therefore, to pass it with only cursory or superficial attention.

To open the subject I begin with stating the two constructions and interpretations between which our choice must be made. The first which I name has been adopted very extensively and from quite early times.——The second, I advocate because I believe it to be true; and being true, of exceedingly vital moment.

These theories may be readily presented by means of a free paraphrase.——The first thus:—Christ was put to death in the flesh, but made alive by the Spirit—by which, after his death and before his resurrection, he descended into Hades and there

preached to the imprisoned souls who were disobedient at the time when God's long-suffering waited on guilty men one hundred and twenty years while Noah was preparing the ark.

The second thus:—Put to death as to the flesh, but imbued with glorious life and energy through the Spirit—in which Spirit, going forth upon the earth, he preached through Noah to those imprisoned spirits then unbelieving and disobedient when God's long-suffering was waiting one hundred and twenty years next preceding the flood.

It will be seen that under the former, Christ did this preaching in person; during the period between his death and resurrection; to the unbelieving generation swept off by the flood; who, at the time of his preaching, were imprisoned spirits awaiting the final judgment.

Under the latter construction, he preached instrumentally through Noah whom Peter elsewhere (2 Peter 2: 5) has in mind as "a *preacher* of righteousness," using the same word for "preach" there as here. As to its spiritual power, this preaching was by and through the Spirit of God, the Scripture narrative making special mention, and indeed its *first* definite mention, of the divine Spirit's work on human souls at that very period: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen. 6: 3).——The participle translated "disobedient," describes their moral attitude in Noah's time, during which time this preaching with the Spirit's power attending, was done.

Under this construction there is here no descending into Hades; no preaching by Christ in person to spirits long dead and in prison; and consequently, no light thrown upon a supposable new moral administration for one or more seasons of resumed probation.

Which of these two constructions and interpretations is the true one?

1. As to the strongly antithetic and even contrasted words—"Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit"—let it be noted that their contrast is not merely between death and life (by resurrection), but yet more definitely, between weakness and power. Indeed herein lies mainly the force of the case as an example to suffering Christians: Fear ye not weakness, suffering, torture; for over against this, as ye may see in the case of your Lord, lie glory, power, efficiency for the salvation of men, exaltation at the right hand of the Father.——The word, "quickened"—more literally made alive, endowed with amazing power (ζωοποιηθεισ), is used frequently in the New Testament, and almost exclusively in this strong sense, for the gift of glorious *life-power*, manifested in raising dead souls to spiritual life in God; *e. g.*, John 5: 21 and 6: 63, Romans 8: 11, Eph. 1: 19, 20; 2 Cor. 3: 6. In several passages, it denotes simple resurrection power in reference to the body.——In this connection, Peter apparently has in mind this whole group of ideas respecting Christ as endowed with deathless energy through the Spirit, including his re-

surrection by the Spirit's power (as in Rom. 1: 4); his inducement with the spiritual forces of the Holy Ghost for the great redemptive work of human salvation through the truth, and finally, his exaltation to the right hand of the Father.——This broad, comprehensive view of the powers granted to Christ through the Spirit is important, not to say vital, to the just apprehension of our passage.

Of course, this construction rules out the utterly inadmissible sense put by some upon the word "spirit" here; viz., put to death in respect to the flesh (his body), but made alive in respect to his spirit (soul);—for Jesus was never dead as to his *soul*. Plainly, therefore, this antithesis can not lie between death to his body and mere life to his soul.

Closely following the original, we may paraphrase the passage thus: "In which Spirit (*i. e.*, in and by means of this gift of the divine Spirit), he also, going forth, preached (righteousness) to the imprisoned spirits, they being then (and previously) disobedient in that ancient time when God's long suffering was waiting in the days of Noah.——Here the Greek word for "disobedient" is the aorist participle *without* the article, qualifying the word "spirits" which has the article. Our English version—"which sometime were disobedient"—is entirely wrong, and can not be justified upon the principles of Greek grammar.

This involves an examination of the laws and usage of the Greek participle when used *with* and when used *without* the article preceding it.——Aware that this problem involves nice distinctions, not easily made clear to minds unfamiliar with the terms and principles of grammar, I shall aim to make my meaning clear, as far as possible, not so much by the use of technical terms understood only by profound grammarians, as by the help of illustrative examples.

The question is one, not of the dictionary but of the grammar; not of the sense of this participle—"disobedient"—but of its grammatical relations.——If the English translation—"which sometime were disobedient," were right, the passage might be interpreted to mean that these imprisoned spirits were "disobedient" three thousand years before Christ died and went to Hades to preach to them. Their disobedience might have been in no sense the occasion or reason of his going. The words—"who were disobedient" would simply identify them as the same who were living in Noah's time.

But this is not what Peter said. He did not say—"who were disobedient." His words can not bear that translation.

This turns upon the grammatical construction of the participle *with* or without the article. The article before the participle is equivalent to a relative before the verb.* If the article were here

*See a case in point Rev. 7: 14: "These are they who came out of tribulation"—*the coming ones* (οἱ ἐρχόμενοι) participle *with* the article; "and have washed"—finite verb in the same construction, etc.

it would fully justify the translation given in our English version. But the article is *not* here. The English version therefore translates words that are not here, and fails to translate correctly the words that are here.——As said above, this aorist participle *without* the article qualifies "spirits" and sustains the closest relations to the verb "preached"—which for convenience we call the principal verb. It signifies that this preaching was to spirits then and for the shortest time previously in a disobedient state, and was brought to them because of, or by occasion of, their disobedience.

These two points characterize the aorist participle when without the article, viz., a very closely antecedent time; and a more or less definite relation of occasion or cause, for the action of the principal verb.——These points should be illustrated and sustained by examples. It will be useful also to carry along with us the very different grammatical relation of the participle when preceded by the article.

Cases from the same author are specially valuable.

Thus in 1 Peter. 2: 15 we have—"For so is the will of God that ye, doing good (participle without the article in the accusative before the infinitive) should silence the ignorance of foolish men." This "doing good" stands in close relations of time with the silencing, and is also the occasion or means of accomplishing it—these being the two points to be shown in the relation of the participle, so used, to the principal verb.——With the article preceding it, the sense would be—It is the will of God that well-doing men—the well-doers—should silence etc. This makes a very different thing of it—much more general and loose: indeed robbed of all special reference to the people to whom he was writing.

Again, in 2 Pet. 1: 18, our English version is: "This voice which came from heaven we heard." But this translation makes the same mistake which we have in the word—"which were disobedient." This aorist participle, meaning "coming down," is without the article, and therefore should be read: This voice we heard *coming down;* we heard it *on its way;* heard it so that we knew whence it came. Its coming preceded our hearing by the shortest time only—only long enough for the sound to reach us; and its coming was the occasion or cause of our hearing it. These two points are therefore clearly involved here.——On the other hand, if the article had been used here, it would justify the received translation, but it would materially mar the sense; for then, so far as this manner of stating the fact is concerned, the voice might have come down any supposable time before the hearing.

1 Pet. 5: 10 affords a case of each sort—one participle with the article and one without it: "The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect," etc. "Who hath called" (ὁ καλεσας)—the one who hath, the same who hath called—is the participle with the article, equivalent, therefore, to the finite verb with its relative.

But the other participle, you *having suffered* briefly (ολιγον παθοντας), aorist participle without the article, means that the persons so described, God will soon make perfect—the time of suffering being very shortly antecedent to the time of God's relief; and moreover, also, the occasion or ground for it—the same two points as before.——On the other hand, "who hath called you," stands in no such close time-relations to the principal verb. This calling may have been years before—even in the past eternity.

In 2 Pet. 1: 10 we read: "If ye do these things, ye shall never fall;" but more closely translated, thus: "For, doing these things" (participle without the article), "ye shall never fall." *While* doing, so long as ye continue to be doing, and *because* ye are doing these things, ye shall not fall—the closest relations of time, and also a distinct relation of cause or ground.—But with the article it would be very general:—the doers of these things shall not fall. This puts the case much farther off from the people he addresses.

2 Pet. 1: 21: "Holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." More closely translated thus: "Spake, being moved;" spake precisely under the impulse of the Spirit, and not otherwise; this impulse being in time closely previous to their speaking, and also its occasion or cause—the same two points every-where appearing.——On the contrary, if the article were here, the meaning would be—Holy men who were moved by the Holy Ghost spake—which makes the statement decidedly more loose.

A very instructive passage to our purpose is Acts 17: 24: "God who made the world and all things in it (ὁ ποιησας; participle with the article)—the maker, the same who made—"being himself Lord of heaven and earth" (participle without the article), "dwelleth not in hand-made temples." Notice the time-relation to the principal verb, "dwelleth," sustained respectively by these two participles. The former has no definite time-relation whatever. No matter *when* God made the earth. The writer implies nothing on that point; for the purpose of his argument he needs to imply nothing.—But the latter—the participle *without* the article—stands in very close time-relations to his verb. Because this Great God is Lord of heaven and earth now and forever, therefore ye can not suppose that he dwells in hand-made temples. Here are both the close time-relation and the relation of cause or reason—the same two points which we find ever present in this use of the participle.

In historic passages we have the same usage in multitudes of instances. Thus, Matt. 8: 23: "Him, having entered into a ship, his disciples followed;"—having entered—the participle without the article, signifying, therefore, that very shortly after his embarkation they followed, and *because* of that embarkation. To say that they followed him who entered—the entering one (participle with the article)—would make it a very different thing. Also, Matt. 9: 27, 28: "Jesus, going forward thence, two blind men fol-

lowed;" going forward, or, better, having gone forward; aorist participle without the article, here as in our passage, in very close relations of time to the principal verb (follow), and bearing the relation of occasion, to this following. But to say—They followed him who departed thence (participle with the article), makes entirely another statement.

Cases of this sort might be cited by scores and hundreds. Let these suffice.

The general doctrine of the aorist participle without the article is put thus by Pres. S. C. Bartlett (*New Englander*, Oct., 1872, p. 608): "The aorist expresses a simple fact, act, or event, antecedent (at least in its beginnings), and hence is the participle chiefly chosen to express barely the antecedent fact or occasion on which (for whatever reason) some other act took place." "It thus becomes a brief and incidental, though loose, method of giving the time or date of the fact of the principal verb. It is so used literally hundreds of times in the New Testament. When attached to the indirect complement of the verb—*i. e.*, in the oblique cases (as in our passage)—this is its sole use."

Applying these well-established laws of Greek grammar to our passage, we have the unbelieving state of these imprisoned spirits, preceding the preaching by only the briefest time; and, moreover, this unbelieving state, the occasion or ground of this preaching to them of righteousness. They were preached to *because* they were so wicked; because they so persistently repelled the warnings of Noah, God's faithful herald.*

Passing to other points, the English translation "sometime" ("which sometime were disobedient") is very defective. Supposably it is put to translate the Greek (ποτε); but this, as used by Peter, unquestionably means—in the old time; long ago. These are the cases of his usage: 1 Pet. 2: 10—"Who in time past were not a people." 1 Pet. 3: 5—"In the old time, the holy women also." 2 Pet. 1: 21—"Prophecy came not *in old time*."—This sense of the word is therefore fixed by the uniform usage of the same author.

It will be objected that the words "preached to the spirits in prison," represent this preaching to be done to spirits—not to men in the flesh; also to spirits imprisoned and not to men living their first probation on the earth.——This objection, if not forceful, is at least plausible, and should be carefully and candidly treated.

Let it then be considered that when Peter was writing these words they were imprisoned spirits; and that Peter's own epistles show that he was in the habit of thinking of both those old

* As to the grammatical terms used by grammarians to designate these two very diverse uses of the participle—*i. e.*, either without or with the article—Hadley calls the former "circumstantial;" Curtius, from its grammatical relations, an appositive; Donaldson, Green, and others, a predicate or predicative.——But with the article preceding it, an attributive—one which ascribes to its substantive an attribute or defines it.

sinners of the flood and of the fallen angels as "cast down to hell;" "delivered into chains of darkness;" and "reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Pet. 2: 4, 9). It was, therefore, not unnatural that in the first brief allusion made to them (as above), they should be spoken of as they lay at that moment before his mind—imprisoned spirits. The further description corrects any possible misconception as to their state at the time the preaching was done. That state was one of persistent, mad rebellion against God and his Spirit, maintained during all that long period while the ark was in preparation. That the preaching was done *at that time* and not while they were in prison is indicated (as shown above) by the usage of the participle without the article; also by Peter's choice of the word for "preach," which, be it carefully observed, is not evangelize—the usual word for preaching good tidings, but is (kerusso, κηρυσσω)—the very word which in Peter's mind best describes the preaching of Noah (2 Eps. 2: 5)—"saved Noah, a preacher of righteousness."* Noah's mission under Christ and through the Spirit was that of preaching righteousness; calling upon the people to turn from their sins to a righteous life, and proclaiming to them the righteousness of God and by consequence his then impending judgments in the coming flood.

Still another consideration should have weight.——The laws of the Greek language in reference to the participle without the article (as already shown) absolutely compel us to admit that the preaching was to men then, at that very time, stubbornly unbelieving, impersuasible. Now, if they were at that time, not men in the flesh, but spirits in prison, then what? Then this follows: that those lost souls in Hades were, morally, worse than the devils!—for we have the authority of an apostle that "the devils believe" (*i. e.*, in the existence of God) "and tremble." But these lost spirits—then two thousand years in Hades—were still defiantly unbelieving, even in the existence of God! This does not look hopeful as to the modern doctrine of "eternal hope." Hades has not proved to be reformatory! If after so long a time, it had not even made them "believe and tremble," there must be exceedingly small ground of hope that they will ever believe—and repent and love.

These points would seem to offset fully the force of the objection now in hand by explanations and by points of counter-evidence which go to show that the preaching was really done in Noah's time, and not at the point immediately subsequent to the death of Christ.

* This verb (kerusso) occurs often in the New Testament in the sense—to preach; but not always in the sense of preaching the gospel. It may mean only to preach righteousness, for its primary sense is to *make proclamation*. Hence it is the right word here for this preaching by Noah.——The other verb (evangelize) means primarily—to preach the gospel—glad tidings—and would be less appropriate here.

Our English translation—"sometime" ("which *sometime* were disobedient")—is far from being accurate. If it was intended to translate the Greek "pote" [ποτὲ] it is entirely incorrect. "Pote" (as shown above) means—*in the old time;* and with (ote—ὅτε) after it—in *that* old time when God's long-suffering was waiting, etc.

2. The next line of evidence lies in the exigencies of the context.——The scope of the context is a legitimate source of evidence upon our pending choice between the two rival theories of interpretation.

In this passage the scope of the context is very obvious. If Christians must suffer (says the writer) let it be for well-doing; not for ill-doing; and let them see in the case of their own Lord Jesus a very striking and forcible illustration of the point. To set forth this example and to put its moral force in strong light, is the aim of the whole passage to the end of the chapter.—— Mark the momentous contrast between his suffering for righteousness, and his reward. His sufferings in the flesh were even unto death; but, in and through the Spirit, he was imbued with deathless energy ("made alive"—ζωοποιηθεισ), and exalted to glorious power.——The death-side of this contrast is passed with no further detail; but the side of life, energy, power, exaltation—is expanded throughout the remainder of the chapter.

Now, if we adopt the first named of the two rival constructions, viz., that he went to Hades and preached, the utmost we can know of the power, sublimity, grandeur, of that descent and of that preaching, is exceedingly small. The whole proceeding seems to me to lie before us as essentially a blank. Not the first thing is known as to what he preached, nor as to the results of that preaching. Whether the slightest results followed, no man living has ever known. On this point no inspired record has whispered a word, or shed one ray of light.

I must gravely doubt whether the first readers of this epistle knew any more about it than we do. I can not imagine therefore that these words (if they must be taken in the sense now supposed) made any definite impression upon their minds as to the moral value—the reward—of suffering for well-doing rather than for ill. That is to say, under this construction it does not appear that the scope of the context—the objects manifestly had in view—were subserved in the least by this illustration of the case.—— But if we accept the second construction (as put above) a field of glorious moral power, activity and exaltation, is opened to our view. First, Christ goes abroad (πορευθεισ, is the word) clothed with mighty power by the Spirit, and pervades the nations with the divine energy of the Holy Ghost attending the preaching of his servants; for manifestly Noah is here only as a representative preacher of righteousness—one out of a host of ancient prophets; and the hardened generation of Noah's time also are named here as a representative people, obviously because on the Scripture record they stand at the head of the generations upon whom the

Spirit strove in connection with Christ's preaching through his servants. These representative men suggested, therefore, all the subsequent ages of human history in which the Divine Spirit wrought for Christ, with and through his human servants, in reclaiming men to God. If sometimes many resisted, grieved, vexed his Holy Spirit, yet many were saved—a few only with Noah through the waters of the flood; but the baptism which those waters suggested seems to have brought to Peter's mind the richer baptisms of the Holy Ghost which closely followed the resurrection of Jesus—at which point we have come to another going (πορευθεις), viz., up into heaven, there to be exalted most gloriously, even to the supreme Mediatorial throne at the right hand of God. These two grand missions—goings forth—first to the great moral enterprise of preaching righteousness through the Spirit and by means of his human servants; and secondly, upward to heaven to be enthroned there in supreme exaltation and glory—these combined make up the second side of the grand contrast—the glorious reward of suffering for well-doing rather than for ill.

Now this view of the context has no lack of significance or of moral power. It witnesses to the results which the writer had in view with telling, momentous force. It puts logic into his words; it so interprets him as to clothe his descriptions and allusions with power, sublimity, and glory! Nor let it be said that Peter's mind was never equal to such comprehensiveness, such logic, such sublime conceptions of the greatness and grandeur of Christ's work through the Spirit, and of his reward; and that we put more into his words than he can be supposed to have dreamed of. Let not this be said; for the tone, the breadth, the dignity of Peter's thought as shown throughout these epistles—the first especially—are to every capable critic a perpetual marvel.

3. Each of these two theories of construction carries with it certain points assumed and involved. The question whether these points are true or not true—are well supported, or not supported at all—must bear strongly for or against these respective theories. To this question the reader's attention is now invited.

As to the second construction, we are very safe in saying that these assumed and involved points are most abundantly sustained in the Scriptures.——Thus (1) that Christ was in the ancient church from Noah's time onward, energizing, sustaining his great spiritual work, needs no elaborate proof. In fact, stronger proof is scarcely possible than that given, Ex. 23: 20–23: "Behold, I (the Lord God, v. 19) send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him and obey his voice; provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions; for *my name is in him*." "But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy to thine enemies," etc. Here the power to pardon or not pardon transgressions assumes his real divinity; that God's "name is in him" makes this angel [messenger] really di-

vine. "Obeying his voice" is substantially "doing all that I speak"—which can be said of none else but the Father and the Son.——The reader may also compare what is said (Josh. 5: 13–15) of "the Captain of the Lord's host." Again (2) that Christ wrought then as now and ever in the person and with the instrumental hand of his human servants the prophets—holy men of God, preachers of righteousness—it would only prove one's ignorance of Scripture to doubt.——And (3) that they wrought by and with the Holy Spirit is also abundantly clear. Two passages will suggest the nature and the strength of the proof.——(*a*) Isaiah (63: 10, 11) speaking of the wayward people of Israel, says: "But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit; therefore he chastened them;" but "remembering the days of old—Moses and his people"—he exclaims—"Where is he that brought them up out of the" [Red] "Sea? Where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him" [Israel]?

(*b*) Stephen's testimony is decisive (Acts 7: 51)—"Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye."

Thus the great points assumed in the second construction are amply sustained in the Scriptures. But the first above named construction—that which supposes Christ to have descended into Hades and preached there—finds no support elsewhere in the Scriptures. As to this supposed descent and supposed preaching, the inspired word, outside of this passage, is utterly silent. All is blank.* If Peter knew this descent and preaching to be facts, there is nothing to show that any other apostle knew this. And never a word, either here or elsewhere,

* Would the reader remind me of Psalm 16: 10 and of the quotations of it in the New Testament by Peter (Acts 2: 27, 31) and by Paul (Acts 13: 35)? That verse reads in our English version, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." But the best criticism makes this: Thou wilt not deliver me over to Hades—personified as King of the underworld; considers "my soul" as simply equivalent to *me, myself*, with no special reference to the spirit as distinct from the body; indeed in this case referring to body rather than to soul; to the corruption of the body rather than to any thing whatever about the soul. This interpretation is very powerfully sustained by the three following considerations; viz.: (1) The force of the Hebrew parallelism, which shows that the sense of the whole verse is—suffer thine Holy One to see corruption in the grave;—(2) Peter makes Christ's resurrection the vital point of the passage. This of course was *of the body*. "David, foreseeing this, spake of the resurrection of Christ; that his soul (*himself* and really the *body*) was not left in Hades (the grave), neither did his flesh see corruption" (Acts 2: 31). (3) Paul, quoting the same passage (Psalm 16: 10) and for the same purpose (*i. e.*), to prove the resurrection, utterly omits the reference to his soul and finds the whole sense of the passage in the second clause—thine Holy One not seeing corruption. These considerations sweep away all the evidence from this Psalm that Christ's soul descended into the abode of lost spirits.

indicates the object of this descent into Hades, or its results. Not a ray of light is thrown upon the subject-matter of his preaching —not a hint that even suggests whether he preached hope or despair; more mercy, or swifter and more fearful judgment. On all these points, unrelieved darkness reigns.——Now what object can be supposed to have been aimed at by saying so little and nothing more, it is entirely impossible for any human mind now to conceive. What good results can have followed from a statement so imperfect, so vague, in its significance so necessarily uncertain—it defies all human sagacity to determine.

All these considerations create an exceedingly strong presumption against the correctness of the theory which involves such difficulties. No other great truth referred to in the Scriptures is left so indefinite, so dark, so unintelligible. We may confidently affirm —It is not the way of the Scriptures—is not the way of the teaching Spirit—to teach divine truth *so*.

4. It is legitimate that the theory which makes Christ descend into Hades and preach there, should bear the weight of its inevitable consequences.——If these consequences become objections, the theory must meet them. If the objections become insuperable, the theory must go down before them.

Now it is reasonable to assume that if Christ went there and preached, he preached *something*. It would be puerile to deny this, and very weak to evade it by saying that we take no responsibility on that point and are not in any respect holden either to define, explain, or justify.——We advance then to this definite alternative:—that if he went there and preached, he preached either hope or despair; either more mercy, or, if this be possible, more certain or more speedy judgment.——The latter of these alternatives—viz., that he preached despair—more certain or more speedy judgment—has few advocates, and may perhaps be dismissed without argument, unless it be to say that so far as we can know, there would not be the least occasion for preaching despair and judgment to those imprisoned spirits. It can not be supposed that this would be in any respect new, or needed. Alas! for they know it already but too well!

Let us then consider the other alternative—the only one which men care to accept and defend; the only one which seems to have any attractions;—viz., that Christ went there to preach hope and mercy.——Against this lie the following objections:

(1.) For this sense Peter should certainly have used the word *evangelizo*—preach good tidings—and not the word he did use (kerusso—κηρυσσω)—which means, to make proclamation; and according to Peter's own usage of it (2 Pet. 2: 5)—the preaching of righteousness; justice.

(2.) The persons preached to were not infants who while on earth did not live to reach moral responsibility; nor were they heathen who had heard no word from God's servants—who had no light of revelation from God, no warnings against sin, no monitions of coming judgment.——Consequently the question of a

further probation *for such classes* is not involved here at all. Whatever the probabilities may be as to a new probation for those classes, has not the least relevancy here and can not come at all within the scope of our present argument. The theory now in question must face the supposition that Christ went to Hades and preached to a generation of lost spirits who stand on the Scripture record (as also here in this passage) the most persistently disobedient, unbelieving, God-defying generation that ever lived on the earth—a generation that went solid against every endeavor God could make to save them—who withstood the preaching of Noah with the Holy Spirit attending for one hundred and twenty years—till God declared of them—"My Spirit shall strive with them no longer."——This theory therefore must meet and must answer the question—Why is this generation singled out from among all the lost generations of men since the world began to receive the preaching of hope from the risen Jesus? Did he go to them in particular because this bold, decisive step would most effectually proclaim through all the realms of the lost, and indeed, throughout the entire moral universe, that God had repented of his too hasty words—"My Spirit shall not always strive;" that really, since that time, he had thought better of that decision, and had concluded to reverse that overstringent policy; and that, therefore, he had now planned to open another theater of probation and hang out the bow of hope again over a ruined race? And to make this new plan clear as the sunlight, was it arranged that Christ should go there especially "*in the* Spirit"—the same Spirit who had been so long insulted and repelled that, (to maintain his own self-respect,) God had declared —"My Spirit shall strive with them no longer?" Does this record by Peter make prominent the agency of the Spirit in this preaching in order to show that all their insult of the Spirit is condoned, and that God retracts his (shall we say?) too hasty, too impassioned words which at the time seemed so decisive and so fearfully solemn?——We are certainly authorized to say that if God has repented of that policy of withdrawing his Spirit and of vindicating his honor when persistently insulted for one hundred and twenty years; if he has since concluded to reverse it and to send his Spirit again to sinners imprisoned and awaiting their final judgment, this would be of all possible methods the best for making it understood. No back-step—no method of recalling and disavowing his former declaration and setting forth a new policy could be more decisive than this!

The reader will not need from me the suggestion that this supposition sweeps away forever what we have often read in the Scriptures concerning God as forever perfect in wisdom, and therefore unchangeable in all his plans and purposes.

5. Yet again: It is currently held by the advocates of this first named theory that Ps. 16: 10, quoted by Peter (Acts 2: 27, 31), refers to this very descent and that it declares—"Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades." So interpreted, this prophecy shows

that Jesus distinctly anticipated that when he should go on this mission of hope and mercy, the Father would not suffer him to stay! The Father would promptly order him back!——But what does this fact signify? What harmony of purpose and of work between the Father and the Son does this indicate? What mission of mercy is this in which Christ with the Spirit goes, but the Father will not leave him there? *Whose* mercy supplies the animus to this enterprise? Is it likely to succeed—the Son with the Spirit being in it and for it, but the Father apparently opposing and remanding him back?

To complicate the case still more, it is plain from the context of Ps. 16: 10 that the Messiah rested in the sweet confidence of faith that God *would* remand him back:—"My heart is glad; my glory rejoiceth; my flesh shall rest in hope; for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell" [Hades]; but wilt speedily summon me away! Indeed! Who then takes the responsibility of this mission of hope and mercy? If even Christ himself is exultant with joy because the Father will not let him stay there, what sort of support does this mission of mercy find?——Soberly, is not the only rational escape from these astounding results, this:—that the whole theory is a baseless fancy, in flat contradiction to the whole strain of divine revelation!*

6. This theory is confronted by the whole vast array of Scripture testimony which goes to show that the present probation is a finality; that its results are simply everlasting—its issues being life eternal to the righteous, death eternal to the wicked. This Scripture doctrine precludes the preaching of hope by the risen Jesus to the lost, imprisoned spirits of Noah's generation.†

21. The like figure whereunto *even* baptism, doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

22. Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

In the last clause of v. 20, "by water" (δι ὑδατος) should not

*In this objection I wish it understood that I assume no responsibility for this interpretation of the words—"Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." I simply put the case upon the interpretation accepted for the most part, as I suppose, among those who advocate the first named theory. Yet let it be said emphatically: If there was any going down to Hades to the spirits imprisoned there; if there was any preaching of mercy to those spirits, then all these objections are to be met. *Whose* heart was in that mission of mercy? *Why* should Christ rejoice that the Father would not let him stay there?

†This subject, involving the much agitated question of "Eternal Hope," will be discussed more fully in Appendix A.

be taken to mean precisely, by means of water, but rather *through water*—were borne safely in the ark through the great waters of the flood.

The ark saving men through the flood-waters suggests to Peter's mind the salvation by Christ which has in a sense its symbol and seal in baptism. The analogies are far from being perfect; yet the ark, baptism, and salvation by Christ have some points in common, and Peter is careful to guard against misapprehension through some of the points that are not analogous, yet might be falsely supposed to be.——That element in baptism which now saves you [you rather than "us" is the improved text] is not the cleansing of the flesh—is not water applied to the person; but is the moral attitude of an upright conscience toward God. The English translation, "answer," fails to represent the Greek [επερωτημα], for this noun and its verb mean question rather than "answer." The apostle's sense seems to be—the honest inquiry for truth, involving an obedient spirit and a sincere purpose of will to please God. Peter would say that a morally purified heart and not a washed body—a heart sensitively alive to God's claims and solemnly purposed to meet them, constitute the moral attitude which insures gospel salvation.——To this salvation the resurrection of Christ is supremely vital. It gave the seal of the Father's indorsement to his anointed Son; it raised this Son to power and glory in the heavens, from which position he sends down the Spirit of power from on high, while himself fills the Mediatorial throne, "ever living to make intercession for his people."

As already shown, this *going up* into heaven [πορευθεισ] constitutes the second great mission or *going forth* of Jesus—put in a mild antithesis with his *going forth* in and by the Spirit for great moral effort to redeem human souls from sin. This second going fills out his sublime work of salvation and consummates his glorious reward for his sufferings even unto death;—thus serving to show how much better is suffering for well-doing than for ill.

That "angels, authorities and powers are made subject to him" sets forth his absolutely supreme authority and dominion. All these loftiest of created intelligences do him homage as their Infinite Lord and King; they await his bidding for any service which the scheme of human salvation may open to them; they come with him in all their myriad numbers and in all their splendor to enhance the majesty of the final judgment; they swell the everlasting song which ascribes honor and glory to Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever. ——Their subjection to the risen, ascended Jesus gives the consummation of his infinitely glorious reward.

CHAPTER IV.

This chapter throughout follows the general scope of the closing paragraphs of the chapter preceding—"better to suffer for doing well than for doing ill" (3: 17); suggesting the various duties involved in a state of earthly suffering and its manifold benefits. —Peter resumes the case of Christ's suffering in the flesh, with its analogies in the sufferings of his people (v. 1); who should learn thence to cease from sin and keep themselves free from all Gentile abominations, whatever those gross sinners may think of it (v. 2–4); who must answer for their sins to the Great Judge (v. 5). Those who suffer for and with Christ even unto death have the gospel for their joy and shall live as to God in the Spirit (v. 6). The end of all things near and their consequent duties (v. 7); various duties enjoined and enforced (v. 8–11); trials, even though fiery, have a worthy purpose and bring great blessings (v. 12, 13); to suffer for Christ in the way of virtue a ground of joy (v. 14–16). The case of Christians suffering under discipline, contrasted with that of sinners, suffering retribution (v. 17–19).

1. Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

2. That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

This allusion to Christ's suffering in the flesh resumes the great antithesis in 3: 18 ["put to death as to the flesh; made alive as to or by the Spirit"], touching the first part, the being "put to death in the flesh." Consequently that antithesis is still present to Peter's thought. The illative Greek particle (ουν), "Forasmuch as," renders this reference to the preceding chapter (v. 17–22) logically certain. The better textual authorities omit the words "for us," leaving it simply, "Christ having suffered in the flesh."——"Arm yourselves with the same mind," conceives of Christ's Spirit taken lovingly into the soul as a defensive armor, shielding against temptation's power. The military figure "arm" suggests that the pending conflict may be unto blood. The clause, "For one who has suffered in the flesh" (ὁ παθων—the suffering one—the one who has suffered), "has ceased from sin," seems to conceive first of Christ as suffering in the flesh and thereby escaping from all the annoyances of sin and of sinners, being lifted thereby forever beyond the possible reach of the evils incident to a sinning world. Then, secondly, Peter seems by a tacit analogy to apply this case of Christ to the somewhat different yet analogous case of his tempted, suffering people, who, under the discipline of suffering, come to cease from sin in the moral sense of being purified from it. The end [results] of such purifying

discipline is that they no longer live their remaining earthly life to the lusts of the flesh, but to the will of God. *To the end* that they may so live, is the precise sense of the Greek preposition here.

The reader may wisely take note of the power of analogy over Peter's mind and its influence in shaping his expressions, as we see it in the clause, "One who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin." There seems no room to question that this phrase was suggested by the case of Christ and took its form from his experience, yet it as certainly passes over to the analogous case of his people. We may take this as one of the laws or habits of Peter's mind, ruled in its action largely by the power of analogies. The fact will help us to interpret other passages otherwise very difficult.

3. For the time past of *our* life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revelings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:

4. Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of *you:*

5. Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

The time past of their life should fully suffice for the ways and works, the follies and abominations, of sin—described here as "the will of the Gentiles," the animus, the spirit of their whole life; and developed with more detail as "walking," living, "in lasciviousness"—*i. e.*, self-indulgence of the baser passions; "lusts"—a comprehensive term for all selfish appetites and impulses. "Excess of wine," well put for the Greek, *overflowings of wine,* "revelings," drunken carousals, such as were common in the feasts of Bacchus. "Banquetings" translates the word for drinkings, indulgence in drinks that intoxicate being the central thing. To crown all, "impious idolatries."——In regard to all which vile practices, they affect to think it very strange in you that ye will not run with them into the same recklessness of self-indulgence. Even blaspheming you, so the Greek word is, which seems here to allude to their malicious prosecutions—false charges trumped up as a ground for bloody persecution. But these men (Peter proceeds to say) must soon render their account (for these malicious bloody persecutions) to him who holds himself in readiness to judge both living and dead—*i. e.*, all who have passed from earth and all who yet remain upon it.—The obsolete word "quick" always in the sense of *living.*

It will help us greatly in our interpretation of v. 6, to note carefully the course of Peter's thought in v. 4, 5, in which blaspheming [English, "speaking evil"] refers to malicious indictments for the purpose of bloody persecution—which again suggests that these bloody persecutors must themselves shortly render

their account for this innocent blood before the Great Judge of all.

6. For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

This passage is one of acknowledged difficulty. A thorough examination of it must involve a careful study of—(1.) Its words, and especially of their antithetic and grammatical relations; (2.) Its relations to the whole context. That is, we must see what words Peter has used; how he has used them; and also, so far as possible, must ascertain his line of thought, both in what precedes and in what follows.

For the aid of the merely English reader, it should be said that the Greek word for "the gospel preached" is evangelizo—the very word for preaching the gospel, but not the same word which Peter used (3: 19) for preaching to the imprisoned spirits. That word meant making proclamation—*i. e.*, of righteousness. The fact that this is a different word detracts very much from the probability that this preaching was the same as that.

Note also that the word for "dead" in v. 6 [νεκροις], though the same word which is used in v. 5 for "dead," is without the article. Consequently it does not say *the* dead—the same dead ones before spoken of. If Peter had meant to say, the gospel preached to the same dead whom Christ is ready to judge, he would naturally have put it *the* dead, with the Greek article of renewed mention. This law [or usage] of the Greek article for a case of renewed mention is unquestionably general, even if not absolutely universal. This omission of it, therefore, bears strongly, even if not fatally, against the construction which would make these dead the same as those.—Interpreting the words *as Peter wrote them*, we must determine who these dead are, not by assuming blindly that they are, of course, the same as those in v. 5, but by studying what he says about them and by due regard to his drift of thought in the context.

Still further of grammatical forms and antithetic relations. The two last clauses—"Judged according to men in the flesh;" "Live according to God in the spirit"—are made directly, explicitly antithetic in every particular. The preposition "according to" [κατα] is the same in each clause, governing the same case [the accusative]. Also "in the flesh" and "in the spirit" are in the same Greek case [the dative], corresponding precisely to each other. Add to this that the Greek particles most commonly used for a contrast or antithesis (μεν and δε) are here, giving this sense: On the one hand, they are judged by men, or as men, in the flesh (as to their bodies); on the other hand, they live as to God (by means of God) in or by the spirit—*i. e.*, as to their souls. This would be the natural antithesis between "flesh" and "spirit," unless important considerations appear to modify it.

The conflicting theories as to the construction and sense of this

passage are mainly resolvable into these two, of which the first assumes a reference to Christ's preaching to the spirits in the prison of Hades—a construction generally adopted by those who so interpret the passage 3: 19. The second supposes the writer's thought to be upon Christians under persecution—who are, on the one hand, adjudged to death in the flesh, on the human side, by their persecuting fellow-men; but, on the other hand, they live before God, on the divine side, as to their spirits—souls.

The first construction assumes as certain and as its main support, that these dead are the same dead as those in v. 5; and this judgment, the same as that. Consequently this first theory must needs assume that this particular preaching of the gospel is to *all* the dead souls in Hades, for undeniably the "dead" in v. 5 are *all* the dead; also that the purposed result of it is, that on the one hand, they must all be judged by Christ at the last day "according to men" (whatsoever this may mean), as to their bodies ["in the flesh"]; but yet that, on the other hand, they shall live on the Godward side, or before God, by means of God—as to their souls.——This would certainly seem to mean that though their bodies experience the final judgment and condemnation, yet their souls have eternal life. The outcome of this interpretation should naturally be the judgment and destruction of all human bodies ["flesh"], but the salvation of all human souls [spirits]. I see no escape from this conclusion if the "dead" here are the same dead as those in v. 5, and if, also, the judgment is the same, at the same bar of Christ. There (in v. 5) the "dead" are doubtless *all* the dead who, up to the hour when Peter wrote had passed from earth by death.——For the difficulties and absurdities which this construction involves, I take no responsibility. How men are to be judged by God as to their bodies, and yet be saved, all right, as to their souls, it must be left to those who so interpret the passage, to explain.

In my view, the true construction must be reached through the evidence which comes in from the following sources: (1.) The legitimate demands of the perfect antithesis between the two last clauses—the being "judged according to men in the flesh," and the "living according to God in the spirit." (2.) The analogy with the passage (3: 18)—Christ put to death in the flesh; made alive in or by the Spirit. (3.) The entire drift of thought in the context, both that which precedes and that which follows.

(1.) As to the antithesis. The second side of it—the living according to God must be living with the life of God—living on the Godward side, as to their souls. Over against this and correlated to it, stands being judged by men as to their flesh, their bodies. On the human side—the side toward men and determined by their relations to man, stands a judgment of condemnation. By men they are condemned to death—a death which reaches the body only, *i. e.*, which is death only as to the flesh. ——Such is the death of all Christians—especially of Christian martyrs. The case here described—"judged as to men with a

judgment reaching to the body only, but living as toward God in the life of the spirit," is that of Christian martyrs and of *no other people of our world.*——This judgment according to men as to the flesh can not possibly be the judgment issued by Christ at the last day; for this would not be "according to men;" this could not judge bodies and not souls; this could not condemn the body and yet give life to the soul; it would be utterly inconsistent with living as toward God in respect to their spirits.——Hence the exigencies and demands of this strong, this perfect antithesis in statement compel us to apply the words to Christian martyrs simply because the words can not reasonably—not to say, can not *possibly*, have a fair, consistent application to any other men of our race.

(2.) In form of expression and also in the sentiment, this passage stands in very close analogy with the last clause of 3: 18; Christ put to death in the flesh (σαρκι), but made alive in the spirit (πνευματι). The words, "flesh" and "spirit" are the same in each passage and are in the same dative case. The "being made alive" in the former passage corresponds to "living" in the latter—the slight difference being due to the circumstance that Christ's living again was a resurrection; the life of the martyrs is a kindred blessedness, a similarly glorious immortality, yet not reached through an immediate resurrection of the body.——So also, "put to death in the flesh" (said of Christ in 3: 18) is modified but slightly as used here of Christian martyrs, by the reference to official, persecuting edicts under which they suffered. In this there may be a tacit reference to v. 5 which speaks of Christ as in readiness to *judge* both living and dead, the writer's thought seeming to leap from Christ's great judgment of those sinners to their petty judgment-seats at which Christian martyrs were adjudged to die in the flesh.——The careful reader of chapter 4 will see that the writer still holds in mind that wonderful example of Christ, suffering for well-doing—suffering even unto death at the hand of wicked men; but raised to life, glory, power—to mighty works of grace through the Spirit and through his ministering servants, and ultimately, to the throne of heaven. He begins the chapter with this: "Christ therefore, having suffered in the flesh" [the same word σαρκι, and in the same case as in v. 6 and also in 3: 18]. Then his line of thought led him to speak of their wicked surroundings, their temptations toward the base lusts and abominable crimes of the heathen; then of their being accused ("blasphemed" is the Greek), much as their glorious Master was. But those wicked men must soon answer before the Infinite Judge whose sway reaches all, both the now living and those already dead. Those godless men may drag you before their tribunals; yet if they should and should even take your lives, your case would be the more like that of your suffering Lord, dying as to the flesh, but living gloriously by and through the Spirit. Such seems to have been the line of Peter's thought, as we get it by due attention to the preceding context. There is not, therefore, the least occasion and by no

means any necessity for supposing that the "dead" of v. 6 must be the same "dead" as those of v. 5. As already remarked, Peter does not say in v. 6, The gospel preached to *the* dead—the same dead referred to just before. If he had wished and meant to say this, he would have said it by the use of the article before "dead" or by some still stronger expression—as we in our English should say at least *the* dead—in the sense of those—the same—dead ones.——Again, the allusion in v. 5 to the final judgment was really but a side-thought, digressing from the general strain of the whole context, and for this reason, we should be misled if we were to infer that the judgment in v. 6 must be the same as that in v. 5. This neglect to notice the general strain of the context throughout this long passage beginning 3 : 18 and continuing throughout chap. 4 has been a principal occasion of misinterpreting this v. 6. We get the just clew to Peter's meaning when we hold well in mind the great drift of his thought throughout this entire passage. Holding this, we trace a sustained analogy or comparison in Peter's thought between the case of Christ on the one hand, suffering unto death at the hands of men, yet living with only the more glorious life and power from God, and on the other hand the similar experiences of his persecuted people.

Yet further, observe the logical connection which introduces v. 6 : *For this cause* was the gospel preached to the dead, to the end that, though on the one hand, judged by men as to the flesh, on the other, they should live from God as to the Spirit or by his Spirit.* This was the design and also the result of preaching the gospel to men; viz., that being soundly converted to God, they might stand fearlessly for his cause, and then even though dying by imperial persecution, they should yet live forever all the more gloriously before God.——Thus this construction meets all the demands of the words; adjusts itself to the strongly antithetic relation of the two clauses; and also harmonizes with the strikingly analogous passage, spoken of Christ (3 : 18).

(3.) It remains to complete our argument by reference to the following context.——The reader will bear in mind that in our interpretation of v. 6, we are making our choice between these two theories: (*a.*) The gospel preached to all dead souls by Christ going down to Hades, in order that, though judged according to men in the flesh [whatever this can possibly mean], they may yet live according to God in the Spirit:—and (*b.*) The gospel preached to all men but illustrated specially in the case of Christian martyrs to the end that, having been adjudged by men to

* This modification as to the word "Spirit" (πνευματι), first in 3 : 18 and then consequently in 4 : 6, seems to be demanded in 3 : 18 by the exigencies of the case (as shown in my notes on the passage), and therefore is admissible here because this verse is so manifestly shaped in imitation of that. On this ground we are authorized to construe "Spirit" here in v. 6 to refer to the Divine Spirit through whom, men dying for Christ in the flesh, have life immortal through God's Spirit.

die as to the body, on the human earthly side, they might yet have immortal life, blessedness, on the divine side through God's Spirit.——Now it is vital to our argument upon these rival theories to ascertain what is before Peter's mind—what he is thinking about—and what are the uppermost, the leading points of his thought. Especially will it sustain the second theory (above put), if it shall appear that he is thinking of the persecution of Christian martyrs—of some "*judgment*" befalling them from human tribunals, somewhat analogous to the final judgment upon their persecutors. If he has these points before his mind, there can be no rational doubt that the judgment in v. 6, said to be by men and reaching the body (the flesh), is rightly, legitimately referrible to Christian martyrs.——The drift of Peter's thought must be learned, not only from the preceding context (as shown already) but from the following context also. We read (v. 12 and onward)—"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, etc.—but rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings"—which shows that the analogy between Christ's sufferings and theirs is present, even vividly, to his mind. Beyond all dispute, therefore, he is thinking of Christian martyrdom.——Much to our present purpose let it be observed that this reference to persecution is not put in the shape of giving new information—stating some fact not known and not in mind before, but is in the shape of an allusion to what is already well known; *i. e.*, the words *assume* that persecution unto fire and death is already before the mind. Therefore, we are justified in supposing it to be referred to in v. 6.——Yet further: "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ"—"blasphemed" was the Greek word in v. 4, translated feebly—"Speaking evil of you"—but showing that there and here the same thoughts were still present in mind.——But especially mark the words (v. 17); "For the time is come that *judgment* must begin at the house of God"—which can be none other than the judgment of civil tribunals, dooming Christians to a martyr's death. This is the same word as the being "*judged* according men" (v. 6) and certainly goes far to prove that the judgment there is that by wicked persecutors against Christian martyrs, because it shows that such a judgment is before his mind.——Nor let us fail to notice on the other hand that the course of thought throughout this chapter 4 makes not the remotest allusion (outside of the supposed reference of v. 6) to Christ preaching to lost spirits in Hades. If Peter said and meant that in the passage (3: 19, 20), he has utterly forgotten it before he begins chapter 4. Omitting the disputed clause (v. 6) of preaching to some "dead," there is not another whisper on that subject. His thought drifts utterly away from that subject to the points of analogy between Christ's sufferings and consequent glory on the one hand, and those of his people in their martyrdom and consequent glory on the other. ——Moreover, in all this context, there is not even the faintest shade of the modern, favorite, profoundly cherished theory of

"eternal hope" for all the wicked. Peter gives us a dark picture (4: 2–4) of their base, vile passions, their beastly lusts; perhaps designs to suggest that their natural hatred of the godly puts them up to malicious, deadly persecution—a fact which leads him to speak of their near impending account at Christ's judgment bar. That judgment suggests to his mind the somewhat analogous judgment which "begins at the house of God"—viz., the persecuting edicts which sought for the martyr's blood—which, however, are to him under God a discipline for heaven. This again brought to his mind by contrast the far more fearful doom of the ungodly whom no mercy shown on earth could save, and he cries out—"If such judgment begins at the house of God, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved—only with great difficulty—only through the sore discipline of suffering, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"——When Peter had written these words, he laid down his pen (we may suppose) with the feeling—Those questions are forever unanswerable! Who can tell what hope there can be in the end of them that obey not the gospel of God? Who can say where the ungodly and the sinner shall ever appear again before the all-righteous Lord God of Hosts?——Probably it never occurred to him that in future ages men would arise to torture his words into the sense of Christ preaching "eternal hope" to the spirits in prison—of Christ preaching the gospel to all the dead—so that though judged as to the body, they should yet all live as to their souls! He did not dream that men would spring to their feet to answer these unanswerable questions (v. 17, 18), saying: Hast thou, O Peter, so soon forgotten thine own answer, that Christ himself went to hell to preach to them eternal hope; that consequently the end of them that obey not the gospel "will be nothing more serious than another probation—another world of mercy?" that the question—"Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" has no particular terror in it, inasmuch as they have only to hear another message of "eternal hope" and have another chance to "obey not the gospel of God!"

Returning to the arguments here employed to determine v. 6, I beg the reader to consider that the sources whence they are drawn are entirely legitimate. The meaning of the words used; the force of an obvious and even certain and strong antithesis wrought into the very constitution of the passage; the unquestionable reference to a similarly constructed passage (3: 18); and finally, the entire drift of the context—the great thoughts continually present to the writer's mind;—these are the legitimate sources of evidence as to the sense of this verse. These sources may have been but imperfectly explored and their treasures but imperfectly exhumed and applied; but it is idle to attempt to decry their application or deny the force of the evidence they supply.

7. But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

The most obvious sense of these words, their apparent—we may call it their surface meaning—is that the end of this earthly, probationary state was near. Consequently the question comes up: How are we to account for this declaration? Did Peter *know* this by revelation from God? Or did he hold it as his personal opinion, formed otherwise than under inspiration? Or was it rather an impression—a sense of eternal things as near, of a sort which involves no settled belief?

The first of these alternatives we must certainly reject:—(*a.*) Because it was not at that time true that the end of all things was near; and God could never have given by inspiration a false view of the time of this final end.——(*b.*) Because Jesus himself said to his disciples (Acts 1: 7): "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power"—words which were obviously aimed to include among lesser events this greatest possible event to our race.——(*c.*) Because Jesus declared (Mark 13: 32) with special reference to "the coming of the Son of man in his glory:" "Of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."——It was never the divine policy, therefore, to teach even the most favored apostle *when* the end of all things should be.

As to the second alternative, Peter may possibly have held this as his personal opinion, not dependent for it at all upon revelation from God.

Paul manifestly held such personal opinions which he distinguished broadly from things taught him by the Spirit of God. In that group of delicate questions treated in 1 Cor. 7: Paul made this distinction: "I speak this by permission, not of commandment (v. 6). Now concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord, yet I give my judgment," etc.

Now I by no means affirm that Peter's supposed view as to the manner of Christ's final coming falls under this law of apostolic thought. If it did, he should (like his brother Paul) have said so, and thus have made a broad distinction between what God had taught him and what he held only as his personal opinion.

The last alternative seems to me less objectionable than any other, viz., that he spake of the end of all things as near because such was the impression, the sense, of eternal things upon his soul. He knew that the time of his own death was near. Jesus had revealed to him that he would die a martyr's death. The waves of bloody persecution were even then (probably) surging over the land, and to his thought his own end was near.—— Moreover, he had just been speaking of the dread account which wicked persecutors must render at the bar of Christ. The presence of their awful crimes and fearful guilt impressed him with the feeling that their day of account *ought* to be and *must* be

close at hand. Moreover, scenes of martyrdom would naturally bring the eternal world exceedingly near to human hearts—make that world seem near in reality. Experience amply sustains this as a law of the human mind—that strong impressions of the solemnity, the majesty, the fearfulness, or on the other hand, the glory of the world to come, make that world *seem* to be exceedingly near. It may have been mainly under the power of this law of mind brought into its full activity by the peculiar circumstances of the hour, that Peter wrote—"The end of all things is at hand."

The exhortation to sobriety and to watchfulness unto prayer is eminently sensible, appropriate, forcible. "Be sober"—in the sense—thoughtful, self-possessed, keeping the full command of all your powers; desisting from all excitements, avoiding all diverting influences, which a deep sense of eternal things near at hand should rule out.

8. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

"Charity" here translates the common and legitimate word of the New Testament for love [agape]. "Love among yourselves" is love of the brethren, brotherly love toward all the saints.—— The words—"Cover the multitude of sins" are identically the same which close the epistle of James—said by him to be a result of converting a sinner from the error of his ways and saving his soul from death. Peter says love does this very thing. Is this his interpretation or modification of what James has said? Does he mean to suggest that real love will put one to Christian labor for the salvation of souls, and in this way cover many sins? This seems more probable than the other possible supposition, viz., that love overlooks the sins of men, leading to the most charitable construction possible of what may seem wrong. The real covering of sins finds its most just sense and therefore its safest interpretation in harmony with James—in that forgiveness which blots them out from the very book and eye of the great God.

9. Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

10. As every man hath received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

11. If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God; if any man minister, *let him do it* as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever.

Hospitality has always been one of the Oriental virtues; so also was it eminently one of the early Christian virtues, warmly inculcated by the apostles:—by Paul, Rom. 12: 13, and 1 Tim. 3: 2,

and Tit. 1: 8; and by the writer to the Hebrews, 13: 2.——Let them exercise hospitality, heartily, in love, and not as under the compulsion of usage, or even of Christian law. So should they use freely such temporal supplies as under God's good providence they might have at command.—This seems to suggest another analogous class of resources for doing good—the *charismata*—the spiritual endowments of the apostolic age. These were various in kind; are somewhat fully defined by Paul in Rom. 12: 6–8, and in 1 Cor. 12: 4–11. In these passages Paul makes these special points, viz: That these gifts are bestowed in great diversity, yet all by the same divine Spirit; that this diversity was designed to meet the diverse wants of the Christian church for instruction and impression; also, to overcome the obstacles lying in the strange, unknown languages of various nationalities; and not least, to cultivate and develop the noble law of the Christian social life—every man to use his special gifts, however humble or however noble, for the good of his brethren and of the whole church, that God may be glorified in all. The law of gospel benevolence—every man working as he may be able for the good of every other man and of the whole body—lifts man upward spiritually toward the benevolence of God himself. We can say of it nothing less than that it is morally sublime. How does it glorify man's social nature and prepare him for companionship with the angels of light! What so noble as to *minister*, to serve, being good stewards of the various, diversified gifts of God!—So Jesus came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, even to the giving of his life a ransom. How should his example inspire his people!——The ultimate, supreme end of all is here brought to view—"that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ." All real benevolence in his people serves to set forth God's own benevolence and so to do him honor. No end of life can be more noble and sublime than this.

12. Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing happened unto you:

13. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

It has been already suggested that persecution is referred to here, not as a new subject, much less as a piece of new information; but as a fact present and ever pressing upon their thought. The fact underlies both this chapter and most of the chapter preceding.——Let them not think it unaccountable that God should leave his people to suffer martyrdom—God who is so mighty to crush his enemies; so able to save his friends; so tender of his children; so utterly out of all sympathy with the Neros of persecuting Rome! Great and good ends are to be answered by these fiery trials.—In so far, therefore, as they may share in common with Christ his bitter sufferings, let them rejoice; for

they will the better appreciate what he endured for them, will love him the more, and be the more beloved of him; and (as Peter suggests), in the revelation of his glory at the great day, they will rejoice with glad exultation!

14. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye;* for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

15. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evil-doer, or as a busy-body in other men's matters.

16. Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

To be reproached for the name of Christ would assume that they were known to bear that name, had openly espoused it, and also that they lived in some measure at least worthily of that name. These facts would carry with them blessings and be grounds of joy. The Spirit of God would rest on them, abiding in their congenial souls, and filling their cup of joy. God will never forsake the people that truly honor his name, truly represent his cause, and nobly suffer for his sake. When did he ever?——But that one who bears the name Christian should suffer for wrong-doing, for crimes that are scandalous even in the eye of the ungodly, how sad! how dishonoring to God!——In v. 16 the better text of the last clause reads—Let them glorify God in this name; *i. e.*, in sustaining worthily the name "*Christian.*"

17. For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it* first *begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God?

18. And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

19. Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

The first question respects the sense in which "judgment begins at the house [church] of God."—It can not be in the sense of retribution, condemnation; for "there is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8: 1). It can not mean that a lesser measure of retribution falls on them, but a greater measure upon the ungodly. The suffering that is permitted of God upon his people in the present life is never retribution, condemnation. Therefore the sense must be, suffering in the line of discipline, and for the ends of refining, purifying, their souls. In this passage Peter probably has special reference to official judgments passed against them by persecuting powers. Imperial edicts of persecution were issued about this time from Rome. These were properly called "judgments," for they were imperial decrees from the ruling power of the nation. Looked at from

their human side, they were judgments then beginning, in this sense; seen on their divine side, they were God's wholesome, though stern discipline to purify their souls in the furnace of fiery trial.—The time had come that "judgment should begin at the house of God" in the sense in which Jesus has said (John 16 : 2): "The time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." "The time is come," etc., signifies that a fierce storm of persecution was then breaking upon them. This expression could not apply to the ordinary forms of discipline from God in his providence, for these are never out of time —are always present in some of their varying forms.—Under this construction of the passage Christians might be said (v. 6) to be "judged as to men in the flesh, yet to live as to God in the spirit."

The next question vital to the moral force of the passage is this: What is the point of the argument and appeal, and wherein lies the pertinence of the great questions here put and pressed? I suggest this: "Judgment beginning at the house of God" signifies on its Godward side how much it costs to prepare men for heaven; how much discipline; how much suffering; how much patient and apparently stern and severe purifying men must needs experience and must take kindly, submissively, in order to be fitted for the pure world above. If this be so, what shall the end be of those who obey not the gospel, who never yield their hearts to its claims, never accept in any wise its regenerating influence, never bow submissively to its discipline? What but ruin can be the end of those whom no gospel love can reach to save—no gospel power for regenerating depraved natures can act upon, because they repel it; whom, in short, none of God's appliances for preparing human souls for eternal blessedness have ever touched to any purpose, and never can?

So again: "If the righteous scarcely be saved"—*i. e.*, be saved only through long processes of discipline, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Where will they find place before God —all unwashed, unredeemed, unsaved from their pollutions of flesh and spirit?—These seem to be the special points of these unanswerable questions.

Therefore, let those who suffer according to the will of God—under his permissive providence, for these high and indispensable ends of purification, discipline, ripeness for heaven—commit the keeping [and care] of their souls in well-doing to the faithful Creator.——No Greek text has the words "*to him*." The improved text omits the word for "*as*" before "faithful Creator." Closely translated the verse would read—Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls in well-doing to a Creator ever faithful.——"Creator" is here in the sense of the new, the spiritual creation whereby souls are new-born to God. So Paul says (2 Cor. 5 : 17)—"If any man be in Christ there is a new creation (a *καινη κτισις*)." In calling God a "faithful Creator" of the new spiritual life, Peter no doubt is at one

with Paul (Phil. 1: 6) in being confident of this very thing, "that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Christ Jesus." To such a "faithful Creator" Christians may well commit the discipline and nurture of their souls, careful only on their own part that it be "in well-doing."

CHAPTER V.

Miscellaneous counsels in closing paragraphs. He exhorts his brother-elders (v. 1–4); enjoins submission of the younger brethren to the elder and urges humility as pleasing to God and the condition of future exaltation (v. 5, 6); the casting of care upon God (v. 7); warns against the assaults of Satan (v. 8, 9); commits them to the God of all grace (v. 10, 11); writes by Silvanus (v. 12); with salutations from the church at Babylon and from Mark, his son (v. 12, 13); with final greetings and benedictions (v. 14).

1. The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:
2. Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;
3. Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.
4. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

Peter writes to the elders as a brother-elder, himself in common with the aged now far advanced in years, and also sharing with them the official rank of elders in the church. The context favors the official idea, since it enjoins feeding the flock of God *among you, i. e.*, under your care. Peter was also one of the original witnesses to the sufferings and resurrection of Christ—this being one most important function of the apostleship. (See Acts 1: 21, 22). In anticipation he also was to share in common that wonderful glory about to be revealed. To him this revelation of the heavenly glory was near. It not only seemed to be so, but it was actually near in time.——In v. 2 the better text omits the words—"taking the oversight thereof" [acting the bishop]. They are not necessary to the sense. It was in point to exhort them to do this, not of compulsion, but of a free heart toward God

(these last words—"toward God"—being added in the better manuscripts); not for base gain, but of a prompt spirit. This is like Paul's recommendation of his beloved Timothy (Phil. 2: 19, 20); "one who will *naturally* care for your state;" not of those who seek their own, but one who seeks the things of Christ. Paul and Peter concur in commending the elders who do their work because they love it, and because their hearts are with and for Christ. Notice that "lucre" is not spoken of with much honor in this connection as the motive for the Christian pastor's service. He should have motives, purer, higher than that.——In v. 5, the first noticeable thing is that the Vatican manuscript omits the entire verse. This manuscript has lain in the archives and keeping of the Vatican at Rome from the fourth century far into the nineteenth, never open to the literary and Christian world till A. D. 1857. The reasons for this almost invincible seclusion and close confinement have not been obvious.

Next as to the sentiment of the verse:—It testifies suggestively to Peter's knowledge of human nature that he should feel the propriety and importance of admonishing his brother elders against unhallowed ambition and love of power. Probably he remembered these words from his Master's lips (Matt. 20: 25):—"Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; but it shall not be so among you." The far nobler principle is that of being examples to the flock. In all the activities and all the spirit of their lives, let them stand before their people as models both in the moralities of the external life and in the living piety of the heart. So living, when the Chief Shepherd should appear, the unfading crown should be their reward.

5. Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

Due submission of the younger to the elder is beautiful in spirit; admirable for its deference to the wisdom and experience of the aged. We need not suppose that Peter would press it to the extent of servility, nor to any improper restraint upon free thought.——In the second clause, the three oldest manuscripts omit the word translated "be subject" [ὑποτασσόμενοι], leaving it thus: Let all adorn themselves with humility toward each other. The verb translated "clothed" seems to carry in it the sense of a beautiful adornment; and justly. "For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace [his favor] to the humble," corresponds with James 4: 6. Which, if either, imitates or quotes the other, it may be impossible to say; nor is it important to decide. The sentiment is worthy of any apostle.

6. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

7. Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

The first clause resembles James 4: 10—the sentiment being expanded more fully. That God loves to exalt to honor those who walk humbly before him is made strong and sublimely grand in Isaiah (57: 15): "Thus saith the High and Lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." Also (66: 2)—"To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembleth at my word." To all such the time for being lifted up will surely come.

It is not perhaps entirely clear what relations of thought this precept—"cast your care upon God"—bears to the foregoing injunction of humility; yet perhaps Peter assumes that the proud man, standing sensitively for the defense of his fancied rights and honors, would be much wiser if he were to commit his case and all his care for it to God. Thus the precept enjoining humility under all God's dispensations carries with it and involves the casting of all one's care upon the Lord.——Be the connection, however, what it may, the precept is precious; finds in all human lives myriad opportunities for application; brings peace to many an otherwise troubled, anxious spirit; and gives to God's people unnumbered opportunities to know in their sweet experience the never-ceasing care of their Father in heaven.——The saints of old were by no means strangers to this sentiment and experience as may be seen in David:—"Commit thy way to the Lord; trust also in him; and he will bring it to pass" (Ps. 37: 5); and "Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he will sustain thee" (Ps. 55: 22).

8. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

9. Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

"Seeking some one to devour" is the more accurate translation. Devour, swallow up, engulf in utter ruin—as if the lion suggested his swallowing his victim whole.——The devil, always your adversary, your natural enemy, who will ruin your souls if he can and may. Did Peter remember his own bitter experience, how Christ had said to him—"Satan hath desired to have thee that he may sift thee as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not;" and how near he came to that fearful doom of being swallowed up by the cruel and crafty adversary of his soul? Peter knew well what advice to give his brethren exposed to Satan. Resist him, says he, steadfast in the faith. Think not that your case is peculiar—worse than that of other Christians. Rather yours is but the common lot. The same afflictions are

experienced in full measure (so the Greek verb) by all the brotherhood of believers. He seems to refer to the afflictions connected with persecution. But in ages of no bloody persecution, Satan finds other avenues of assault. No Christian need expect exemption. His safety lies in unceasing watchfulness and perpetual resistance, with unfaltering steadfastness and faith in Christ.

10. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle *you*.

11. To him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

But [you need not fear], for the God of all grace—the same who hath called you unto his eternal glory in Christ and who will by no means leave his work undone—will surely—ye having suffered but a little time—make you perfect, firm, strong, well-grounded. These verbs are future rather than optative—a prediction or assertion of what will be, rather than a prayer that it may be. Peter was confident as to the certainty of God's gracious help, and therefore could intelligently and most heartily ascribe to him all dominion [power] forever. Some of the older manuscripts omit the word for "glory." Power is plainly the leading idea. His thought is upon that marvelous power which God manifests in giving perfection, firmness, strength and steadfastness to all his tempted people.

12. By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.

13. The *church that is* at Babylon, elected together with *you*, saluteth you; and *so doth* Marcus my son.

14. Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace *be* with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Silvanus is another form of the name Silas. Noticeably the name is uniformly Silas in the Acts; Silvanus in the Epistles. Probably this is the same Silas who appears often in the history of Paul's labors, prominent in the great Jerusalem Council (Acts 15); with Paul at Philippi and onward. By him Peter sends this letter to the churches whom he addresses.——The words "as I suppose" look toward the word "faithful," leaving us to judge whether he means, faithful and true in his general Christian character, or merely faithful *to you*—one who may be trusted to do his service in good faith as the bearer of this letter. The latter I take to be the sense.——The point of Peter's testimony is that this grace in which they stood, on which they were reposing, is the true, genuine, gospel grace. It is no myth, no mere supposition or fancy, but the genuine gospel of the Great God.

In the opening of his epistle (1: 2) Peter had recognized the strangers to whom he wrote as "elect." Here he says the church at Babylon is elect, equally, jointly, with themselves.——On the clause "Marcus my son," we have the question to settle whether this be a lineal son, or a son in the faith and love of the gospel, the word "son" indicating special affection as for a younger Christian brother. Paul uses the same word of Timothy (2 Tim. 1: 2)—"To Timothy, my dearly beloved son." The current opinion is that Mark is called "son" here in the same sense. We have an allusion to this Mark (probably) in Acts 12: 12.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER.

CHAPTER I.

With only the most simple introduction of himself as both servant and apostle of Christ, Peter addresses all who have obtained the same precious faith, praying for their greater grace and peace (1, 2), most abundant provision for this having been made in the revealed knowledge of God and of his gospel and by means of exceedingly great promises, all looking toward becoming like God and dead to sin (3, 4). By successive stages advancing from grace to grace (5–7); such progress insuring fruitfulness in divine knowledge, while the lack of these graces implies blindness and mental stupidity (8, 9). But on the other hand unceasing diligence guarantees salvation and easy admission to the heavenly kingdom (10, 11); Peter writes as one consciously near death (12–14); would leave them some words to be remembered (15); words confirmed in his case by the scenes and voices of the transfiguration (16–18), and also by the ancient prophecies indited by the Holy Ghost (19–21).

1. Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ:

2. Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

Comparing Peter's brief introduction of himself in this second epistle with that in his first, we may notice two points added here, viz., the name Simon in addition to Peter, and the epithet "servant" in addition to "apostle." These variations in his description of himself should not militate against the supposition that the same Peter wrote both epistles. No writer should be held to any stereotyped method of describing himself.

Another difference more important is the omission of all reference to geographical localities. The provinces named in the first epistle are omitted here—yet probably should be assumed. He addresses all Christians who have obtained the same precious faith which himself and his associates have enjoyed. This allusion to the gospel faith as always and every-where "precious" is at once simple and beautiful.

For the English phrase—"through the righteousness"—we have in Greek—"in the righteousness," these words following immediately after the word faith—thus raising the question whether he would connect "in the righteousness" with "faith," or with the "obtaining" of faith. In the former construction the sense would be, faith *in* this righteousness as something believed; in the latter, the obtaining of faith would be ascribed to this righteousness, as our English version has it—obtaining faith *through* the righteousness, etc. The former is supported by the close location of the word faith to this clause—"in the righteousness." It is also the usual sense of the preposition "in" [ἐν]. Yet either construction is admissible and either sentiment true. ——Righteousness is probably here in the sense of clemency, kindness, mercy, rather than justice.——May grace and peace—all best spiritual blessings—abound to you by means of knowing God and Jesus our Lord. Peter doubtless remembers the words of his Lord—"This is life eternal, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John 17: 3). All progress and all abounding in the graces of the Christian life must in the nature of the case come through knowing God and his Son.

3. According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue;

4. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

In v. 3, the precise sense and relation of the first Greek word [ὡς], "according as," calls for special notice; the more so because Tischendorf begins here a new paragraph, while our English version connects it closely with the verse preceding. It seems to me that the line of thought which connects this with the preceding verse is essentially unbroken, and of this sort. This prayer for abounding grace, through the knowledge of God and of Christ, is entirely legitimate, reasonable,—because it is in accord with those free gifts which his divine power has bestowed and which come to us through knowing him who hath called us, etc.

Translate v. 3: "According as his divine power has freely given us all the things requisite for life and godliness through the knowledge of him who hath called us to his own glory and virtue—"*his own*" being in the better sustained text. The beautiful sentiment is that God has called us to become like himself—to the attainment of his own glorious character and his own intrinsic virtue. "Be ye holy, for I am holy."——Then v. 4 repeats and expands the same sentiment, beginning—"By whom" [better than "whereby"] the precious and very great promises have been freely given us (the same verb for *given freely* as above)—that by means of these promises, ye might become partakers of

the divine nature, having *fled* and so escaped from the corruption in the world through lust. Thus this somewhat extended sentence reiterates and enforces these points:—That God's supreme aim is to make his children holy as himself: for this purpose he has given us most freely all things requisite unto such life and godliness, and especially those precious and very great promises, all depending upon and requiring more and better knowledge of both God the Father and Jesus Christ his Son.

5. And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge;

6. And to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness;

7. And to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.

Our English, "Besides this," is misleading, the sense being—For this purpose; for the sake of reaching this result.——Using the utmost diligence, add to one Christian grace another and yet another. Give special attention to the culture, first of this; next of another, and so on throughout this precious catalogue. The verb for "add" suggests a continued additional supply, as where fresh demands call for fresh outlays; the sense being, therefore: Aim at perpetual progress in the Christian life by giving special attention and effort to these Christian developments one after another, that each in turn may have growth, expansion, augmented strength.——So "Add to your faith, virtue"—manly energy, vital working force. Let your faith inspire manly heroism, bringing forth such fruits as the writer to the Hebrews shows that faith wrought in the glorious saints of old.——We do well to remember that it was Peter who wrote this—Peter, who never can forget how sadly himself came short of this manly heroism (virtue) on his first really great trial, when he saw his Master in the death-grasp of the savage Sanhedrim. Oh, if he had only "added to his faith virtue"—more of the old Roman heroism, the stanchness of brave endurance and fearless steadfastness! It need not surprise us that after faith, he puts this first on his list of the needful graces.——Then add to such virtue, knowledge of God, of Christ, of all the great things of the gospel. We have seen (v. 2, 3) how vital he regards knowledge to be as the means and agency through which comes all Christian growth.——"Temperance" must be taken in the broadly comprehensive sense of self-control, the self-command of every appetite and passion, including of course the passion for stimulants, but not omitting any other harmful indulgence.——"Patience," also in the broad sense of meek endurance of whatever sufferings or ills may fall to our lot, for all human life is full of them.——"Godliness" has special reference to godly fear, a reverential attitude, a holy fear of God and conscientious dread of displeasing him.——"Brotherly kindness"—literally love of the brethren; and to this add—love to all mankind—love that knows no limitations of per-

son.——What a group this of qualities of character, noble and beautiful, each to come under every man's watchful eye and self-shaping hand, that he may round out his whole Christian character into beauty, symmetry, strength and glory.

8. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and can not see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

For these things being in you and abounding, will cause you to be neither slothful nor unfruitful in respect to the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ—his mind still dwelling upon progress in this best of all knowledge.——"Slothful" is much more accurate than "barren"—the sense "barren" lying in the next word—"unfruitful."——For he who has not these Christian graces is blind; short-sighted; has forgotten his being cleansed from his old sins. He has lost all sense of obligation for pardon and moral cleansing; has forgotten the mercy that offered him salvation; forgotten his vows of consecration to a new life of gratitude, obedience, love. This assumes that every Christian should maintain in living and fresh power upon his soul a sense of the great mercy that blotted out his first sins; should hold this sense as an ever-quickening, inspiring force, impelling him on in his Christian life.

10. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

11. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Give diligence to make your calling and election sure—never assuming that this is a thing to take care of itself—that the salvation of those who suppose themselves to be elected is of course sure and requires no further care or labor on their part. No, indeed; but rather "give all diligence"—great and unceasing, to make your final salvation sure.

For "doing these things"—is the precise sense; while doing these things—so long as ye habitually do these things, ye shall by no means ever fall.——"For so, an inheritance shall be *ministered* to you abundantly"—this verb "ministered" being the same which is used above (v. 5) for "add" to your faith, etc. It seems to be an intended play upon the word. If ye perpetually *supply* fresh strength and new developments to all your Christian graces, God will *supply* for you most richly an abundant, easy entrance into his heavenly kingdom.

12. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always

in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth.

13. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting *you* in remembrance;

14. Knowing that shortly I must put off *this* my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me.

By a slight change of text according to the better authorities, the first verb has the sense—I must continually remind you; or I am about to remind you of these things, although aware that ye know them. But without assuming to teach you any thing unknown before, I may at least *remind* you—bringing back these precious things to your earnest thought. I write as one who knows well that his death is near; or as the sense may be—that my decease will be sudden, instantaneous, when it shall come. His Lord had long since signified his death by violence (John 21: 18, 19).

15. Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

He would leave them some permanent record that might long outlast his mortal life—a favor not to them only, but to the church of God from that hour onward to the end of time.

16. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty.

17. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

18. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

Peter would inform his readers how himself and his fellow-disciples, James and John, came to know respecting the power and coming of the Lord, and were therefore able to make this known to them ["to you"]. We make this known to you—not having followed myths of sophistry—artfully devised stories—but having become personal eye-witnesses of his majesty. We saw the very things we state to you—the glorious recognition of the mighty Son of God from the very heavens.——These Greek participles—"having followed;" "having become eye-witnesses;" do not drop into our English idiom with entire facility, yet the strictly literal translation can not be misunderstood. We made those things known to you, having *not* done that, but having done this. We did not get our knowledge in *that* way, but did get it in this—*i. e.*, by means of our own eyes and ears. It was from God, the very Father, that he received the honor and the glory of

being recognized as his beloved Son. "Such a voice"—more strictly, an utterance, audible words, distinct to our ears, constituting an announcement, was borne down to him "from the excellent glory"—which expression seems to be taken from the Shechinah of the Most Holy place in the temple.——The words heard were—"This is my beloved Son"—as we read in the story of the transfiguration (Matt. 17 : 5).——This utterance borne down to him from heaven, we heard, being with him in the holy mount. We heard it coming down—being borne down, and could not be mistaken as to the source whence it came. The English translation—"The voice which came"—fails to render the Greek closely, omitting one of the vital points of the case, viz., that they heard it coming and therefore knew it came from heaven.

19. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts:

20. Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation.

21. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.

The first clause is literally: "We have the prophetic word more sure"—leaving us to determine whether the greater certainty compares prophecy with such an audible voice, or with itself as it was before this additional confirmation. He might mean: The word of prophecy more sure than such an audible announcement from heaven; or the word of prophecy made more sure by the events of Christ's earthly life.

The former construction might seem to be supported by the special regard which he forthwith proceeds to claim for prophecy. But the latter is shown to be the true construction by the location of the adjective (βεβαιοτερον—"more sure") before the article, and not between the article and its noun, while the adjective "prophetic" stands between them. The word "more sure," standing before the article, and not between the article and its noun, requires the sense—We have the prophetic word made more sure; *i. e.*, by the confirmation it has received in the way of fulfillment and otherwise.*

Ye do well to take heed to that ancient prophecy, considered in whole, as to a light shining in what would otherwise have been a place totally dark; and so shining until day-dawn should

* The adjective so located becomes what Hadley (see 488) calls a "predicate adjective" as distinguished from an attributive—the attributive being one whose connection with its noun is *taken for granted* in the sentence (*e. g.*, "The good man practices righteousness"); the "predicate adjective" one which is *brought by the sentence* into connection with the substantive—which is the case here.

brighten and the day-star rise upon your hearts—by this graphic figure setting forth the actual uses of prophecy in the ages before Christ came.

Knowing this (v. 20) as of the first importance, that no Scripture prophecy was ever of any man's private setting forth. The word "interpretation" misleads the mind because it suggests the interpreting of given words rather than the bringing forth of the words themselves. Peter meant to say, not that no prophet privately interpreted his own words, but that no prophet brought forth his words from his own mind. He did not originate them; did not bring them forth, unloose them from his own thought-stores.——This construction of his meaning is made perfectly plain by his argument. "*For*," prophecy was never brought down to us by (or from) the will of man; nor did it come out of his thought, purpose, impulse; but men of God, chosen and used of God for this purpose, spake, being moved by the Holy Ghost. Literally, "They spake, being borne onward, their minds carried, moved where and as he would, by the Holy Spirit. It was due to his impulses or suggestions—the bearing along of their minds under his sway, that they uttered their prophecies, and not to any impulse of their own personal will. The word for "will" (θελημα) purposely denies their voluntary agency in determining what to predict. The human element is excluded and its responsibility for the things said is denied; while on the other hand, it is affirmed that they spake, being borne along, as passive agents, by the Holy Ghost.——Such is Peter's conception of Scripture prophecy.

CHAPTER II.

The false prophets of ancient time suggest to Peter the false teachers among the Christian communities addressed. Their character and doom are the subject of the whole chapter (v. 1). They have a large following and a pernicious influence (v. 2); their spirit and their speedy judgment (v. 3); the argument from the case of fallen angels; the antediluvian world and Sodom on the one hand, and righteous Noah and Lot on the other, brought to bear (v. 4–9); their character resumed for further description (v. 10–19); the last end of apostates fearful (v. 20–22).

1. But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

The transition of thought is natural from the true prophets to the false—such as appear prominent in the book of Jeremiah, in the history of Ahab, and elsewhere; and from these to the false teachers of kindred spirit who rose up to imperil unwary souls in

the communities addressed in this epistle. By cunning arts playing skillfully upon human passions and prejudices, they ensnare men into heresies fatal to their souls.—The word "privily" suggests the cunning, insinuating methods they used. The specification of their false doctrine is that of "denying the Lord that bought them"—*i. e.*, denying Christ as one who had bought them with his blood. This means, rejecting the atonement; disowning Christ as Redeemer and atoning Sacrifice.—So doing, they bring upon themselves swift destruction. For such deniers of Christ, no salvation can be possible, nor can there be any reason why God should spare them through a long life on earth.——Incidentally the case shows that the atonement by Christ was made ample enough to save some at least who will be lost. They denied the Lord who bought *them;* repelled a salvation provided adequately for themselves; perished when they might just as well have been saved if only they would. On the side of provision through Christ's atoning blood, nothing more needed to be done. They despise and repel a salvation really purchased and paid for in their behalf.

2. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

3. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

For "pernicious," the better text has licentious [ασελγειαισ]—a word which looks rather to the moral causes of their errors than to their ruinous results. Through their influence the way of truth is "blasphemed" (Greek)—"the way of truth," meaning either the system of gospel truth itself, or the course of life to which the truth leads; probably the former primarily—the latter by natural result.——Verse 3 looks toward the motives of these false teachers, among which the love of money seems to be plainly indicated in both "covetousness" and "merchandise." Their ambition to make proselytes had an eye to money. Once made, they managed to turn them in some way to the money account. This virtually denies to them all worthy motive; denies all purpose to do good, to save men's souls, or to honor God. All their aims were low, base, supremely selfish. Peter manifestly believes that bad doctrine has its root in a bad heart, and seems not afraid to say so.—He describes the arts of these false teachers—"with *feigned* words"—words framed, shaped, fashioned to their foul purposes. God's judgments against such men can never move slowly. Now for a long time not inert, says Peter, their destruction sleepeth not. O how swiftly shall it come, and how terrible its fall!

That their destruction is most sure, Peter proceeds to infer from the doom of other great sinners—as we shall see.

4. For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast

them down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

5. And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth *person*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

6. And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned *them* with an overthrow, making *them* an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

7. And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

8. (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed *his* righteous soul from day to day with *their* unlawful deeds:)

9. The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

"For" [γαρ] connects itself logically with the case of the false teachers.

"If"—inasmuch as—"God spared not," etc. Spared not the sinning angels—literally the having-sinned angels; the angels, they having sinned—where the aorist participle indicates that the sin preceded the not sparing by only the briefest time. All suddenly the blow fell with no mercy and no delay.—Hurling them down to Tartarus in chains of darkness, he bound them over to be kept for judgment—*i. e.*, until the great day for the common judgment of all the rebels in God's universal kingdom; all fallen angels, and all the fallen and not saved of our race.

Here we have in brief form but most explicit terms the grand fact as to God's dealing with the rebels of his moral universe. They meet a common, an inevitable doom. Doubtless for the sake of a deeper and more pervading impression, this great judgment scene will concentrate all the judgment work of the universe into one momentous day. The fallen angels are held imprisoned, awaiting the consummation of God's redemptive work for our race. This done, the unsaved and incorrigible of men and the angels that sinned with no redemption, shall appear before the same glorious Son of man, their final Judge!

Jude (v. 6) is with Peter in his statements on this point: "The angels that kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."—The Scriptures elsewhere assume and in this way indorse these statements; especially does our Lord in his somewhat minute account of the final judgment scene (Matt. 25: 31–46): "Saying to those on his left hand: Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, *prepared for the devil and his angels.*" See also Rev. 12: 7–9, and 20: 10.

The case of the antediluvian world is put in the same terms—"not spared"—after they had proved themselves utterly incorri-

gible through one hundred and twenty years of patient waiting and persistent warning—all in vain.——"Saved Noah"—the word "saved" suggesting that he was shut up, imprisoned for safekeeping in the ark. "Noah the eighth"—there being seven besides, all members of his family. He "a preacher" (herald) of righteousness," witnessing to that godless generation of the claims of righteousness and of God's eternal justice, sure to overwhelm the guilty.

Buried the cities, Sodom and Gomorrah, in ashes, with fire from the Lord out of heaven (Gen. 19 : 24)—making them an example of men who would, were sure to or about to, live impiously as toward God. But delivered righteous Lot, pained with the licentious life of those wicked men—wicked in the sense of lawless, reckless of all law, all purity.——Verse 8 digresses to give more in detail the pain of heart felt by Lot, living in the constant presence of such outrageous wickedness.—"That righteous man, dwelling among them day after day with sight and hearing,"—compelled to see and compelled to hear—"tormented his righteous soul" (so the Greek) "with their lawless deeds." He could not escape the sense of torture in his soul under the presence of such awful crime!—These strong statements seem designed to justify God not only in rescuing righteous Lot, but in not suffering such monsters in crime to pollute the earth longer.

Hence the apostle draws his grand inference: If God spared not the sinning angels, nor the God-defying men of Noah's time, nor the morally rotten men of Sodom; but saved Noah and Lot —righteous men—protesting against the wickedness they could not stem and could not endure—then, we conclude, the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of their temptation, and also how to reserve the unjust to the day of judgment to be punished. He *knows how!* He never can lack resources; will never be short of the requisite powers and agencies. His plans are long since laid; his agencies provided and in waiting.

10. But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous *are they*, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

11. Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusations against them before the Lord.

12. But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;

13. And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, *as* they that count it pleasure to riot in the day-time. Spots *they are* and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you;

14. Having eyes full of adultery, and that can not cease

from sin; beguiling unstable souls: a heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:

This graphic description of the false teachers under consideration is in the main entirely clear, setting forth their intense and beastly sensuality; their contempt and defiance of all proper authority; their self-will; their intruding themselves into the Christian love-feasts, perpetually beguiling the unstable. "A heart exercised with covetous practices" suggests a special discipline and culture (gymnastics being the word) in covetousness.—— Several of these phrases are essentially common to Peter and to Jude, rendering it quite certain that they both describe the same class of men, and very probable that one imitated the other, yet leaving the question open which was the original. The allusion (v. 11) to angels as beautiful examples of moderation in speech is much more definite and full as it appears in Jude, for he refers it to Michael by name and to his dispute with the devil over the body of Moses as the occasion. These circumstances favor the opinion that Jude, in this point at least, was the original.

15. Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son* of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

16. But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbade the madness of the prophet.

Jude also compares these men to Balaam; but in this case Peter gives the more full and minute account. Both agree in representing covetousness to be Balaam's great and damning sin; but Peter adds a reference to the rebuke which the dumb ass with human voice gave to the prophet's madness.

17. These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever.

18. For when they speak great swelling *words* of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much* wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

19. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

"Wells without water"—tantalizing but bitterly disappointing —would be a very expressive figure in those Oriental lands where water so often fails, and its failure is so sorely felt. So of clouds from which men hope for rain, but sadly see them wind-driven and scattered away.——To such "the mist of darkness"—darkness most dense, as when the air is heavy laden with vapor—is reserved, laid up in store.——The older manuscripts omit the

word *forever*, though it appears in Jude 13. The continual usage of the word "reserved" by Peter [$\tau\eta\rho\epsilon\omega$] makes its meaning entirely certain without this addition. (See 1 Peter 1: 4 and 2 Peter 2: 4, 9 and 3: 7.)

"Great swelling words of vanity" well represent the original Greek and also the character of the vain conceited men here under description. Assuming, pretentious, wordy, skilled in playing upon the passions of the ignorant or unsuspecting, they allure as with well baited hook (Greek) those who had almost (within a little) escaped from the circle and the spell of deluded men. Promising them liberty, but being themselves the slaves of corruption; for a man is the slave of him by whom he is overcome and brought under. The man who is in bondage to his lusts is the lowest of slaves, for his master is the meanest of all masters. Small ground has he to boast of liberty.

20. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

21. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

22. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

The case supposed here is that of one externally reformed, escaped from the pollutions of the world through his knowledge of Christ, yet becoming again entangled—involved in them—through the power of his old unslain lusts. His last state is worse than his first. So Christ taught (Matt. 12: 43–45) under the case of the unclean spirit, once gone out from a man, yet, having no rest elsewhere, returns to find his old home in the most inviting order, and thereupon takes a troop of other more wicked spirits to come in and dwell there and make that man's last state worse than his first. Better for a man never to have known the way of righteousness than to have known it so well and yet apostatize from it. Knowledge abused brings on man the deepest possible curse, because it involves the greatest possible guilt. Peter puts the case pungently by his citation of two kindred proverbs:—the dog returning to his own vomit; the sow, once washed, to wallowing again in the mire. That, after the gospel emetic should in a measure have cleansed a man's heart (moral stomach) of its foul abominations of impurity and lust, he should go back like a dog to his own vomit, is not only disgusting but fearfully debasing and guilty. So also the sow may be washed and for the time appear decent, but the swine-nature remaining will plunge her into the mire again. Her case requires a deeper change than a bath can give.

CHAPTER III.

The writer refers again to his main purpose in these epistles (the first and the second)—to remind them of the words from God through the prophets and also the apostles (v. 1, 2); calling their attention specially to the scoffers whose coming in these last days had been fore-indicated (v. 3); to what they said (v. 4); to what he replies by reference to the creation, the flood, and the future destruction of the earth by fire (v. 5–7); that lapse of time affects not the certainty of God's threatenings (v. 8); that delay of judgment is only long-suffering, to make repentance possible (v. 9); what the day of the Lord will bring upon this world (v. 10); and how this should move men to live (v. 11, 12). The new heavens and earth in promise (v. 13) and how under this hope and promise Christians should live (v. 14); that Paul holds the same views (v. 15, 16)—closing with final admonitions against the errors of the wicked and exhortations to growing grace and knowledge (v. 17, 18).

1. This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:

2. That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Savior:

The reader will notice this very distinct recognition of the present as his second epistle, having the same general purpose as the first—which purpose he speaks of very modestly—not as one assuming to teach things unknown before but only suggesting and recalling to their special attention what they had known or might have learned from the old prophets and their own apostles. The improved text reads—not "of us," (the apostles), but "of your apostles;" *i. e.*, apostles of your own age, in contrast with the prophets of ages long past.——In saying—"your *pure* minds," he indicates his confidence in their Christian simplicity and integrity.

3. Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

4. And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation.

It was of the first importance that they recall the predictions of the coming of scoffers in the last days—the days then passing. The older authorities make the phrase for "scoffers" specially intensive—shameless scoffers—(Greek εν εμπαιγμονη εμπαικται)—defiant and reckless.——That they "walk after their own lusts"

traces their skepticism to a bad heart. Their scoffing came of a self-indulgent spirit which would brook no restaint, and therefore cast off all fear of God. Peter never shrinks from charging home all skepticism to the account of godless sensuality—the influence of unrestrained lust.

It should be noted that the characters portrayed in the second chapter differ quite materially from those described in this third. Those were not scoffers, but were false teachers, teaching something which they claimed to be religious truth. They obtruded themselves into the churches and into their love-feasts. But these men are shameless scoffers, downright infidels and contemners of all things sacred. They not only profess no faith in God's word, but they boldly deny its truth and assert it to be fiction. ——It should be noticed that the term "promise"—("promise of his coming") contemplates God's word on the side toward his people, not toward his enemies. To the latter it would be threatening, rather than promise. Hence this was their turn of thought: What do you, Christians, think now about the promise of his coming, of which you have said so much and so foolishly? Is it not about time you should give up all such idle dreams and hopes?——Since the fathers who began this talk long ago went to their graves, things move just as they have ever since the world was made. No signs appear in earth or sky of the coming ye have expected so long!——This reference to "the fathers" is probably to the early Christian witnesses—the first apostles.—— Some one has said that their allusion to the creation admits, what some modern skeptics deny, viz., that the world had a Creator and therefore a beginning. Peter avails himself of this admission to infer from it that a world which had a begininng may have an end; a world which had a Creator may find in him One able also to destroy!

5. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

6. Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

7. But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

For this they are glad to forget;—literally, it escapes their notice with their glad consent. To be blind to this fact which I am now to state is of all things to their mind and will. They love to rule it out of their thought.

"That by the word of God the heavens were of old." In this clause the word "were" should be made slightly emphatic, so as to express the real sentiment, were *created*. We find the clue to the meaning in the Hebrew manner of speaking of the creation as being effected by the *word* of the Almighty: "God said,

Let there be light; and light *was*" (Gen. 1: 3). "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made: for He spake and it *was;* he commanded, and it stood fast" (Ps. 33: 6, 9). This ancient Hebrew usage makes it certain that the word "were" in this passage signifies—were created: and ascribes this creation to the word of God—the divine fiat.——"And the earth, standing out of the water and in the water." The sense of this passage—so obscure to many—has its clew in the ancient Hebrew conception of the process of making (we might say) the dry land. Moses (Gen 1: 9) puts it—not, let the dry land be made, but "let the dry land appear." They had no conception of a solid globe (as we have), but thought of an immense body of water, neither the bounds nor the depth of which came into the account at all, but up from the bosom of which the dry land rises, appears, and then stands together (so the Greek word συνεστωσα, signifies); assumes and maintains its solidity. It emerges *out* of the water and *through* the water (δια)—which should never have been translated "*in* the water" but *through*. Thus conceived and understood, the passage becomes entirely lucid. By the word of the Lord the earth—dry land—emerged from the vast ocean waters, and stood firm. But how easily God could let it sink again!

So v. 6: by which creative fiat—the same divine power which spake the heavens into being and lifted the dry land to constitute the solid earth;—by this divine word, the world as it then was [the then world, Greek] overwhelmed with water, perished—in the great flood of Noah's time. But the present heavens and earth are by the same divine word treasured up—held in God's keeping—reserved for fire unto the day for the judgment and perdition of the ungodly men. The fact of the great flood, and indeed the very constitution and manner of production, of the dry land (as they thought of it) would strongly indicate the final destruction of this world by water rather than by fire. But God's thought and revealed plan declare its final doom to be destruction, not by water but by fire. As to resources, it is with him all the same—infinite for either.

Here it can not be out of place to suggest the well known astronomical fact that within a comparatively recent date, some heavenly bodies of immense size—apparent stars, really suns—the center like our sun, of their own solar system, have perished by conflagration.——I quote from Burritt's "*Geography of the Heavens,*" p. 40: "On November 8, 1572, Tycho Brahe saw a star in the constellation of Cassiopeia, which became, all at once, so brilliant that it surpassed the splendor of the brightest planets and might be seen even at noon-day! Gradually this great brilliancy diminished, until March 15, 1574, when, without moving from its place, it became utterly extinct. Its color during this time, exhibited all the phenomena of a prodigious flame:—first it was of a dazzling white; then of a reddish yellow; and lastly, of an ashy paleness, in which its light expired. It was visible for sixteen months."——La Place, remarking on cases of this sort, says—"It

is probable that great conflagrations, produced by extraordinary causes, take place on their surface."——Dr. Good states "that within the last century, not less than thirteen stars in different constellations, seem to have totally perished and ten new ones to have been created." Facts of more recent observation indicate not their total destruction but rather an immense conflagration which greatly reduced their brilliancy and apparent magnitude, but left them still within telescopic range of vision. Prof. R. A. Proctor, in a recent work—("*Myths and Marvels of Astronomy*"), has a chapter on "Suns in Flames;" in which he gives somewhat full details of such cases;—besides that of 1572; another in August, 1596; another September, 1604; one in 1670; and in the present century, in 1848, 1866.——The result of such observed facts seems plainly to show that sun-conflagrations are entirely possible; are fully within the laws of nature under which the Creator builds, sustains, or destroys the material worlds of his universal empire; and that, therefore, the words of Peter have the known analogies of the visible heavens to sustain them.

Notice, also, the bearing of these facts upon those defiant scoffers. Peter would say;—Ye are glad to forget that God's creative word brought into being the heavens, and can as easily blot them out; lifted the solid earth out of its surrounding and sustaining waters, and could with infinite ease let it sink again; did bury the old world with a flood, and might with no conscious effort drown the earth once more. They forget that their footing on this solid earth has no bottom at all as against the fiat of the Almighty! They do not consider that the God they scoff at holds them in his hollow hand; upholds all the little footing they have to stand on; can engulf this vast globe in fire at his will any day! Do they dare to think how delicate and gossamer-like the thread by which they hang suspended over the fires of perdition?

8. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

"Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing"—using the same word here as before (v. 5) of the willing ignorance of the scoffers. Do not follow their example of willing ignorance, but hold this truth in its freshness upon your souls.——As to the sense of "this one thing"—"one day with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day," it is pertinent first to notice that it manifestly imitates Moses (in Ps. 90: 4): "A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night"—which means that the lapse of time in his sight and in relation to his being and activities, must not be estimated as

it is in our sight and in relation to our being and our work. Time brings changes to us, but no change to him. Time wastes away our strength and sends us back to dust; but through all time the everlasting God retains his vigor unabated; his powers unwasted.——Such was the thought of Moses in that great funeral dirge—Ps. 90. There is no reasonable doubt that Peter took from that Psalm the thought which he puts into this verse.

Some have assumed to find here the doctrine that time is unknown to God; that to his thought and experience there is and can be no *time*. They are wont to say that in place of the idea or fact of time, God exists in one "eternal now." All events, all points of what we call time, are eternally present to him—not only in the sense of a present knowledge, but of a present reality. That is to say: The creation of our world, chronologically to us (suppose) six thousand years ago, is really to him as much a present fact now as it was then. The final judgment-day is a transpiring event to him as really as it will be to us when the archangel's trump shall wake the dead and bring us actually there.

My great objection to this is that it can not be true. God must certainly conceive of things as they are, *i. e.*, according to truth and the reality of things. And it is in the very reality of things that the creation of the world is past, and that the final judgment-day is future. Neither of these events is, this moment, transpiring. For this reason God does not conceive of them as this moment transpiring.

Let us pass from these speculations—to say that the point of Peter's declaration bears upon the *certainty* of God's word of promise, and of threatening. God is not slow of promise—will not prove himself slack in the sense of failing to fulfill in its time. Some men may think him slack, forgetful, likely enough to fail altogether; but in this they are utterly mistaken. The reason for his long delay is quite another than this. It is because he would have none to perish. He sincerely desires, earnestly longs, to have none perish but all come to repentance. Therefore it is that he waits on a sinning world so long. As this is the only waiting he has provided for—the only opportunity for repentance that he proposes to afford—the only one he can honorably grant—therefore he would extend it to the uttermost limit of hope; would wait as long as waiting can be of the least avail.*

That God sincerely, intensely, desires the salvation of every sinner, is the doctrine of all Scripture—a doctrine infinitely honorable to himself; entirely vital to his scheme of salvation through the death of Christ his Son; the only doctrine which can at all account for the delay of retribution upon defiant scoffers who deliberately insult their Infinite Maker and Judge!——Paul has the doctrine in very similar words (1 Tim. 2: 4); "Who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." He wills it in the sense of intense desire, but always assumes that

* The older manuscripts put it "long suffering toward you" [not "us"].

their coming to the knowledge of the truth is the only possible way to be saved. He must of necessity will this coming to gospel knowledge as the only and indispensable means of salvation.

10. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

The threatening (or as respects the righteous the promise) of the great day of God will surely be fulfilled. That day will come as a thief; (the better texts omit—"in the night"). This figure is often used by Christ; always to denote what is sudden, and as to time, unanticipated and unknown.——In this day, the heavens shall pass away with a crash, perhaps as of explosion; the elements —component parts of the earth—burning, shall be dissolved—become a molten mass: the earth and all the works it contains, shall be utterly burned, consumed. These words are strong, and it would seem, in their sense, unmistakable. They teach the utter destruction of this globe by fire. The interpretation which makes the sense—not "burnt up" but merely *burnt over;* not molten, consumed, burned thoroughly, perfectly—but scorched, its foulness removed by fire and the globe itself prepared for the eternal abode of the righteous;—this interpretation seems to pay no regard to the words which Peter has used. Undoubtedly if Peter had meant to say that this world was to be *burnt over*, scorched on its surface and well purified by fire, he could have found appropriate words for it. But he certainly could never have used the words we find here—to express those ideas. It is much wiser for us to search for the sense which a sacred writer obviously selects words to express, than to assume what he ought to mean, and force his words to our preconceived notions.

The destiny of our earth to be consumed by fire could not be made more clear and sure by any words known to us than by these words of Peter. How large the sense of the word "heaven" may be here, it is very difficult, perhaps impossible for us to determine. The Hebrews used this word with great latitude of meaning. The "fowls of heaven" range in the lower strata of the atmosphere; the clouds and the rains of heaven, in a strata somewhat higher; moons, planets, stars, in far higher regions. How many of the heavenly bodies, if any, are to be involved in the predicted destruction of our globe, it was, apparently, not the purpose of God to reveal. Nothing beyond what pertains to our own earth can be of special importance to us. At this point, therefore, the definite teachings of revelation have their natural limit.

11. *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness,

12. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day

of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

The moral lessons follow—evermore the thing of supreme concern. Facts even of such momentous interest are not revealed for the sake of gratifying human curiosity, but for the far nobler end of inspiring a holier life.

Since all these things of our earth—all there is on it and of it, of utility, beauty, grandeur; all the fruits of human toil, genius, and skill—are to be burned up, and none can know how soon—what manner of persons ought ye to be in holy living and godliness, earnestly looking for and awaiting with strong desire the coming of that day of God, by means of which day and its coming, the heavens, burning, shall be dissolved, and the elements [of this earth] consumed by fire shall melt? The Greek words, translated—"hasting unto the coming" are very remarkable, there being no word for "*unto;*" and "coming" being the direct object of hasting; the natural sense is that of *hastening forward* that event, as if our eager longing for it would bring it to pass the sooner. No doubt our eager and earnest longing does bring that august event *consciously* nearer to our heart; make it *seem* more near, and give it more the sense and the power of a reality. This amounts to bringing ourselves nearer to it, though not *it* to us in real time.——This fact and this law of our mind (let it be carefully noted), may give us the real explanation of the sense in which the apostles spoke of that day as "near."

Did Peter indeed (unconsciously shall we say?) comprehend the mental philosophy of this sense of nearness, and see that an eager and earnest longing does hasten it along—bring it near, *i. e.*, to our heart and thought?

When we come to consider that event in its relation to actual chronology we can give Peter's words no other defensible significance except that of eager and earnest awaiting.——"Wherein" (for *in which*) does not translate well the Greek preposition. It means rather (as translated above) *by means of* which coming; *because* of it.

13. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

"But" (better than "nevertheless"), we, according to his promise, are looking for (the same "looking" as in v. 12) "new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."——"His promise" leads our thought most naturally to words spoken by Christ in person; yet as we find no such words from his lips, we may accept the words of his inspired servants, either prophets or apostles, as virtually his own. This accords with Peter's own doctrine as to the words of the prophets (1 Pet. 1: 11)—"Searching what time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify."——We find the new heaven and the new earth fore-indicated

and therefore promised—earliest by Isaiah (51 : 16 and 65 : 17–25 and 66 : 22); later by John (Rev. 21 :). If it were important to determine to which (if to either one exclusively) Peter alludes, we might find it necessary to ascertain whether John's apocalypse was already in the hands of Peter. I judge that it may very probably have been so; yet the early date of the epistle would not prove that Peter had seen it.——This we may say with more certainty; that Isaiah's thought was more clearly of great moral and spiritual changes rather than of material; while John as manifestly contemplates the material changes as well. John's new heavens and new earth certainly involve a new sphere of being, new localities, new worlds. It is by no means clear that Isaiah's language involves this. He certainly does not make this feature by any means prominent. (See my notes on his passages, especially on 51 : 16, where his first allusions to new heavens and a new earth appear.)

14. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

15. And account *that* the long suffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;

16. As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

The moral lessons are pressed again, enforced by the authority of Paul, of whom he speaks in terms of the strongest affection and confidence. We need not infer that Paul had addressed epistles specially to these identical churches. Rather, it is implied that his epistles had ere this been compiled and circulated extensively among the churches, other than those to whom they were specially addressed; and were already on the same footing with "the other Scriptures"—which, with little if any doubt, are those of the Old Testament.

What the points "hard to be understood" were, is not indicated. It is vain, therefore, to conjecture. That some men wrested those passages as well as what they found in other scriptures, to their own destruction, is the main point to be noticed. The unstudious and unstable experienced this fearfully sad result—as should be expected. Even apostolic words, however well put, will be of small avail to men who will not study them, and will not abide in their truth when known. A studious and docile spirit and a conscientious, obedient, and stable life are the conditions of profit from the revelations of God's will through his apostles.

17. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* be-

fore, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

18. But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and forever. Amen.

Being now forewarned, beloved, be on your guard against being led away into these errors of godless men—said with apparent reference to the false teachers of chap. 2; and to those who wrested Paul's words to their own destruction. Let them beware of falling from their firm position—that which befitted them and in which it seems they had stood thus far. Their safety lay in perpetually growing in both grace and the knowledge of Jesus. These words—"grace and knowledge"—express most comprehensively and precisely those things which should command their most diligent regard and their unceasing endeavors for growth and progress. These points above any and all others, constitute the burden of these epistles. And most deservedly. Perpetual progress in knowledge as to Christ, and perpetual advance in the cultivation of all the Christian virtues and graces, make up the appropriate activities of the Christian life. Therein lie the Christian's strength, his present usefulness and safety, and his ultimate salvation.

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JUDE.

INTRODUCTION.

The writer of this very short epistle describes himself in two points only. First, as a "servant of Jesus Christ;" second, as "a brother of James"—the former supremely honorable, but not particularly distinctive, not helpful toward identifying or locating him; the latter, however, making his person as definite as that of his brother. It is usually assumed, with good reason, that this James is the author of the epistle that bears his name—the renowned pastor of the church at Jerusalem. The fact that James was so well known made it quite sufficient for Jude to describe himself as his brother. Whatever doubt remains as to the identity of James will therefore equally affect Jude—the main one being whether they were of the original twelve, or of the group of "brethren of the Lord," brought into the church and into Christian service about the time of the Lord's resurrection. This question has been treated in my introduction to the epistle of James, and need not be re-opened.

So far as can be learned from the introduction to this epistle, the people addressed may have lived anywhere, and may have been either Jews or Gentiles. They are defined only as being the friends and followers of Christ. The epistle is therefore what is called catholic;—not in the modern sense, opposed to Protestant, but in the more ancient sense, universal, unrestricted, designed and adapted for all the people of God.—It should be added, however, that the strong resemblance between this epistle and 2 Peter 2, coupled with the allusions in v. 17, 18, seems to show that the people addressed here are the same whom Peter addresses there.

The main purpose of the epistle is indicated clearly, and suffices to place this by the side of 2 Peter in the one noble

aim of admonishing the saints to stand for the defense of gospel truths against false teachers and their perversions of the true gospel doctrine. With this he pertinently couples exhortations to high Christian attainment and a steadfast life in all godliness.—The close similarity of this epistle with 2 Peter 2 will be very obvious. His allusions in v. 17, 18, may be regarded as probably having reference to Peter among other apostles; and if so, will place the date of this epistle somewhat later than that of Peter.

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JUDE.

1. Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* called:

2. Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.

The older manuscripts concur in making the text *beloved* (ηγαπημενοις) instead of "sanctified." Instead of supplying "and," as in our English version, without authority, it seems better to read the whole clause—"To the called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ." Thus, as Bengel remarks, "the beginning and the consummation of salvation are pointed out"—the agency from which it takes its rise, and that also which crowns it with victory in the end. So salvation from first to last is of God through his dear Son.

Each apostle seems to have his own form of benediction. Peter in both his epistles this: "Grace and peace be multiplied to you" (1 Pet. 1: 2, and 2 Pet. 1: 2)—which is varied in Jude to this: "To you may mercy, peace, and love be multiplied." It is delightful to think how deep and warm were the outgushings of an apostle's sympathy and prayer which sought expression in these rich words.

3. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

In the first clause, "using" (literally making) "all diligence to write unto you about our common salvation," some critics find an intimation that Jude once had it in mind to write more extensively than here in this short epistle—a purpose which may or may not have been carried into effect. If so, it is unfortunately lost. If not, then, by some means unknown to us, he may have been diverted or otherwise prevented from its execution. These are only conjectures; for the clause may indicate nothing beyond reflection, desire, or purpose to write in a more general way than here, during which reflection he became impressed with the necessity of writing to the brethren for the special purpose named here. "I held it (saw and felt it) a necessity to write to you, exhorting that ye contend earnestly (agonize, Greek) for the faith once delivered to the saints."—"The faith" here is the system of revealed truth; not faith subjectively considered; not "faith"

in the sense of intellectual belief or even of heart-trust, but in the sense of the *things believed*, because revealed from God to his holy apostles and prophets. No doubt, faith in the mind and the heart should be diligently cultivated both by personal effort upon ourselves and by social effort upon others; but this is not the point of Jude's exhortation here. He is thinking of the glorious gospel truth, then brought into peril by certain men whom he proceeds to describe, whose influence he implores his brethren to withstand at the start and to the utmost!—This earnest exhortation bears witness to his sense of the inestimable value of gospel truth and of the imperative demands upon all right-thinking men to stand for its defense with wise and most determined, constant endeavor. Let no cry against bigotry alarm or deter them; let no artful effort to decry doctrine (or even "dogma") have any other influence than to gird their loins to mightier endeavor. The faith [truth] that once came down from God is too precious to be sacrificed, too noble to be vilified, too vital to be toned down or in the least modified. Let it abide and live on in the keeping of the church of God through the light and power of the Holy Ghost till its glory as it shines on earth shall fade into the richer, sublimer light of heaven!

4. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

For certain men have cunningly insinuated themselves into your church communion—men not springing up to the surprise of God, but fore-written (Greek) of old, well known long beforehand; Godless men.——That they "turned the grace of God into lasciviousness" means only that they abused, perverted it for purposes of lasciviousness, self-indulgence in their own base passions, and not by any means that they changed its essential nature. What they in fact did is further described by going back to the root and primary cause of their lasciviousness—viz., the mutilation and perversion of God's regenerating truth; they "denied the only Monarch (δεσποτην), and our Lord Jesus Christ." Probably this is essentially what Peter (2 Eps. 2: 1) has expressed in the words, "denying the Lord that bought them." If so, it shows that fatal error in regard to the person and work of Christ sprang up before the death of the latest apostles—a fact to which John's epistles bear most abundant and painful attestation (1 John 2: 18–22 and 4: 1–3, and 2 John 7, 11). No blow could possibly strike the gospel system nearer to its heart than this. It matters comparatively little whether this false teaching smote at his true divinity, his real humanity, or his atoning sacrifice; the mischievous results would be essentially the same. No one of the great facts pertaining to Christ's nature and redemptive work can be spared. Not one can be mutilated without damage, not to say *ruin*, to the whole.

5. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

6. And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

7. Even Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

The underlying logic of this epistle—the points assumed as the basis for its line of thought—should be noticed.——The great present fact which stirs the solicitude of this apostle is—that vital gospel truth is imperiled by the perversions of ungodly, lascivious men. The facts assumed in Jude's presentation of their sin and doom are, that ungodly lasciviousness naturally begets unbelief in God's revealed truth; that God has, therefore, brought down his most stern and fearful judgments on unbelieving men for their great sin, leveling these judgments especially against those bold manifestations of unbelief, rebellion, lust, crime, which the history of guilty men and devils brings to our view.——Hence he would remind them of what the ancient Scriptures so fully teach—that "the Lord having saved his Israel out of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not." The unbelief developed upon the report of the spies (Num. 13 and 14) is specially referred to—a developed unbelief at once most unreasonable, very extensive, for it pervaded the masses of men of mature years, and most offensive to God. It virtually paralyzed the moral stamina of the whole nation and thoroughly unfitted them to enter Canaan.

Next, "the angels who kept not their first estate" [of holy obedience], "but left their own habitation" [as being no longer fit for the realms of purity and bliss], "God had bound over in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Peter testifies to the same points of their destiny. ——Next, Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities adjacent are described in the points of their sin and of their doom. Unrestrained and unnatural lust was their damning sin; fire, the emblem of the eternal doom of the lost, became the means of their punishment. They stand before the ages as the example of what it is to "endure the vengeance of eternal fire." It can not be supposed that Jude meant to say that the fire which consumed Sodom was itself eternal. But he did mean to say that it was the *symbol* of it—that their case stands before the world, lying upon the pages of the world's history, as the example, the illustration, of "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."

8. Likewise also these *filthy* dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

In the Greek words of Jude as to "these dreamers," there is no authority for the word "filthy." It is better not to add to the inspired words. That they were "dreamers" indicates that their notions were fanciful, mere dreams, altogether unreliable. ——"Defiling the flesh" classes them with the men of Sodom. They discarded authority; spake evil, in reproachful terms, of what should command respect.——Peter (2 Eps. 2: 10) uses the same descriptive terms—doubtless for the same class of men. Both proud and vain, intensely self-assuming, they had no respect for true merit, no deference for just authority, no honest fear of even God.

9. Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, the Lord rebuke thee.

10. But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

11. Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

It is a striking illustration of angelic purity that Michael, a lofty archangel, abstained from railing at even the devil, deep though his convictions were that the devil was utterly in the wrong. It was safer in its reaction upon his own spirit to say simply—"The Lord rebuke thee." I leave your case with God. I can have no sympathy with your spirit; no confidence in your word or your purposes; but let God be your judge and mine.

The question at issue between them was over the body of Moses —the special points of it being left open to every man's conjecture.——How Jude came to know of this dispute he has not informed us. If we say by tradition, the question still returns as to the original authority for the tradition—on which point we have no wisdom.

It shows the reckless spirit of these false teachers that they indulged in blasphemous words as to things of which they knew nothing. As to things of which they should have animal instincts (like irrational creatures), in those they corrupt themselves. Their drift toward moral corruption perverts even their animal instincts, making them more vile than beasts—more base in their lasciviousness than animals that have neither reason nor conscience.——This makes a dark picture of baseness and crime —in the first point, putting them lower than the beasts themselves; and in the next, along side of the most notorious sinners

of Scripture history;—wicked as the first murderer Cain; hungry and mad for the gains of lying divination as Balaam; ambitious and defiant of God's authority as Korah.

12. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds *they are* without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

13. Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

On the word rendered "spots," the question of exact significance lies between the English version "spots"—a disgrace to your communion; and the sense of *breakers*—hidden rocks upon which ships are wrecked. Greek usage favors the latter; the immediate context and the analogous passage in Peter (2 Eps. 2: 13) favors the former.——They obtrude themselves into your love-feasts to indulge their gluttonous propensities—not to cultivate fraternal sympathy—not for any worthy purpose whatever.——Waterless and wind-driven clouds, corresponds to Peter's description (2 Eps. 2: 17).——Utterly fruitless, barren, like trees more than dead, even rotten, with not sense enough to conceal their own shame. The point of comparison in the figure—"wandering stars"—we might determine with more confidence if we better understood their notions of astronomy. With our knowledge of the great laws of gravitation we should call men "wandering stars" who had broken loose from the great bonds which hold the moral universe in order, obedient to God—and were sweeping wildly unto their own certain and deserved ruin. "The blackness of darkness" is their appropriate place.

14. And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints,

15. To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

"Prophesied" may be taken in the general sense, preached—except so far as his words respecting a final judgment may be considered a prophecy.—Enoch preached to such sinners as these of whom he speaks, and of the final judgment and its objects, here defined to be—"to execute judgment upon all the race; to convict the ungodly of their wicked deeds, wickedly perpetrated, and of their hard [severe, reproachful] words which they (un-

godly sinners) had spoken against God." This is an eminently sensible presentation of the purposes of the final judgment:—to convince the wicked of their guilt; to set before them its enormity and its just desert, so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world stand consciously self-convicted and self-condemned before his bar. What can be more appropriate, more wise, more righteous, than this? Undoubtedly we may somewhat enlarge the sphere of this convicting influence, and say—God would not only convince all the ungodly of the justice of their doom; but would set forth his infinite justice before all the unsinning, intelligent universe, before all the unfallen "angels, principalities, and powers in the heavenly places," who, as they must see the awful doom of the lost, should certainly be made to know their ill-desert. The doom is so dreadful, the sufferings so fearful in their nature and so appalling in their eternal duration, that they must beget a deep sympathy with the sufferers, save as the manifestation of their yet more awful guilt and of their utter rottenness of moral character may and will impress a sense of the righteousness and of the simply absolute inevitableness of their doom. O what lessons are to be taught there upon the intrinsic, eternal mischief and ruin that come of rebellion against God!—The great judgment-day will unfold before the eyes of all the intelligent universe the material for unending study and thought—the great facts out of which must come convictions that can never wane—convictions as to God's ineffable wisdom, righteousness, and love; convictions as to the unspeakable guilt and the naturally inevitable ruin of rebels against the throne of God.

The question will be raised—From what source did Jude obtain these facts in regard to the prophecy of Enoch? All we can say is: possibly by direct inspiration; more probably from tradition. A volume called "The Book of Enoch" has been brought fully before the literary world during the present century, written probably in the second century before Christ, though possibly (as some suppose) not until the second century after Christ. It has been queried whether Jude may not have borrowed from this book the statements made here. Perhaps so. This is the opinion of some learned critics. But even if so, it is highly probable that Jude had access to the same traditionary sources from which the writer of this "book of Enoch" drew his staple facts.

16. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling *words*, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

The last clause—"Having men's persons in admiration because of advantage" is another mode of saying—they "have respect of persons"—regard for external distinctions that have no intrinsic merit—a culpable partiality that has only supreme selfishness for its bottom.——Thus Jude closes his extended description of the

men whose mischievous sentiments and teachings were then bringing peril upon all truth and righteousness.

17. But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

18. How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

19. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

This allusion to forespoken words of apostles has its only perfect counterpart in 2 Pet. 3 : 3, where we have the very term "mockers," and the same description—"walking after their ungodly lusts." This seems to indicate that Jude wrote later than Peter, and with Peter's epistle before him, and also in the hands of those to whom he wrote.——"Separate themselves"—"Separatists," schismatics, severing themselves from their brethren for no good reason.—— "Having not the Spirit" of God in their hearts—a fact sufficiently demonstrated by their sensuality, and by their divorcing themselves so readily and causelessly from the Christian brotherhood. The words show that in the judgment of the apostles, the presence or absence of the Holy Spirit in the heart might be readily known from the spirit and the life of men. The Spirit of God never can be an inert presence—never a power unto nothing; but is always a power unto holiness—unto the real Christian life. If this power makes no manifestation of itself, the presumption must be that its presence is not there. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;" out of the deep love and pure faith of the heart, the life takes its tone and the very soul its stamp.

20. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

21. Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

"Building yourselves up" (in the sense of Christian edification) "on your most holy faith" signifies *by means of it*—using it as the means, the instrumentality of your strength and efficiency.——The thoughtful Bible-reader will ask whether faith here is the system of truth believed (as in v. 3 above), or the heart's belief of that truth. Of course both must be involved; but the figure of building up (as a house upon its foundation) is best answered if we take it as the system of Christian doctrine. ——"Praying in the Holy Ghost"—relying on his guiding hand upon your thought and his inspiring power in your soul—corresponds to Paul: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication *in the Spirit*" (Eph. 6 : 18); also to this promise: "I will pour upon the house of David a Spirit of grace and of supplication" (Zech. 12 : 10); and also to these words of Paul: "The Spirit

helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which can not be uttered" (Rom. 8: 26). All these exhortations are at once beautifully terse and plain, and surprisingly rich in spiritual significance. Blessed are they who accept and obey!

In the phrase—"keep yourselves in the love of God"—the last words might mean either our love to God, or God's love to us. In the former sense we have this result: Keep yourselves in the constant exercise of love to God; in the latter—this: Maintain such a spiritual state that God shall love you constantly. The former is the more natural construction, particularly because all the precepts in this connection look toward personal Christian exercises of mind and heart.

22. And of some have compassion, making a difference:
23. And others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

On these verses to the word "fire," the three oldest manuscripts differ somewhat from each other, and yet more, from the formerly received Greek versions. Tischendorf settles down upon a text which may be translated thus: One class, men of wavering mind, convince [with argument]; another class, save, pulling them out of the fire; on others, have compassion with fear.*

Then follows the last clause as in all the old texts: "Hating even the garment defiled by the flesh"—with a deep sense of the shameful guilt of unbridled licentiousness.

24. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,
25. To the only wise God our Savior, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Following the corrected text, these verses may be translated: To him who is able to keep you never stumbling, and to present you spotless before his glorious presence with exultation—to the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory and majesty, dominion and power from all eternity, and now, and unto all eternity. Amen.

"*Able* to keep" uses the strongest Greek word for actual force,

* The reader may be interested to see the variations in the three oldest manuscripts; thus: The Sinaitic: "And of some who waver, have compassion; and others save, pulling them out of the fire; and of others have compassion with fear." The Vatican: "And of some who waver, have compassion; save them, pulling them out of the fire; and of others have compassion with fear." Alexandrian: "And convince some who waver; and others save, pulling them out of the fire; and of others have compassion with fear."

power. "To keep you never stumbling"—is the terse and forcible form of the original thought. The word "wise" before "God" is omitted, and with improvement to the sense; inasmuch as the phrase—"the only wise God" might be understood to imply another God, not wise. The passage (1 Tim. 1: 17) has the same corrected text. The addition of the past eternity will be noticed, the ascription of glory and majesty being not only now and through all the future, but through the past as well.

Thus closes this gem of apostolic thought and heart. We have abundant reason to be thankful for "Jude;" thankful that this short letter was not left out of the canon because so brief; thankful that we have its few words, so pregnant with spiritual richness and counsels of wisdom.

APPENDIX.

CANON FARRAR'S DOCTRINE OF "ETERNAL HOPE."

In definite statement (Preface to "Eternal Hope," pages 22, 23), Canon Farrar admits "that there is a terrible retribution upon impenitent sinners both here and hereafter; that without holiness no man can ever see the Lord; that sin can not be forgiven till it is forsaken and repented of; and that the doom which falls on sin is both merciful and just."*

But while avowedly holding these opinions, he dissents from and even denounces these four features of what he regards as "the common, popular view of the sinner's doom;" viz.:

(1.) Its physical torments;

(2.) Their necessarily eternal duration;

(3.) That it falls on the masses—the immense majority of the race;

(4.) That in the case of impenitent, unpardoned sinners, it begins at death, and thenceforward is forever irreversible.

* These words—"both merciful and just"—suggest at the outset one of the stubborn difficulties to be met in any discussion whatever with Canon Farrar. In the strict and ordinary usage of these words, a doom according to the sinner's deserts, or (which is the same thing) according to the law of God, is, and is called, *just*. Over against this, if the just sentence of the broken law is overruled and set aside, the sinner being treated by God infinitely better than his deserts, it is fitly said to be of his *mercy*. Thus, justice and mercy, as related to the sinner's doom, are essential opposites, having no elements in common. Consequently, no sinner's doom can be at once according to justice and according to mercy. The sentence of God's law against the sinner can not be at one and the same time overruled and executed. No criminal can be at the same moment pardoned and hung. These two destinies will not admit of being confounded, mixed together. The one is done under law and according to justice; the other sets law aside by the exercise of mercy. The difficulty with Canon Farrar's statement is either in the words chosen or in the thought; either the words dishonor established usage, or the thought dishonors the truth.

Before I proceed to debate these points, it is important to say that upon the first, I make no issue. Whether the sinner's doom includes physical suffering, or pertains to mind only, it may be impossible for us to determine, nor is it at all important. That his sufferings are chiefly those of the mind must be inferred from the nature of the case. But the full and precise significance of the words which describe it—words admitted (at least by myself) to be figurative, can never be reached with certainty from our present stand-point of knowledge.

His third point—viz., that the vast majority of the race will be lost, I by no means believe, resting my faith in the salvation of the very great majority of the race, not on the future repentance of men dying in their sins, but on the prevalence and power of the gospel through the long ages of its triumph under the present gospel dispensation. But I must waive the discussion of this point, purposely discounting, however, all the argument for "eternal hope" which he would fain derive out of the recoil of human hearts from the thought that the race are to be almost universally lost. No wonder the hearts of men recoil from this supposition.—— Thus the reader will see that my issue with Canon Farrar is reduced essentially to two points: (1.) That the sinner's future doom is eternal; and (2.) That after his death it is irreversible.

Fairness of discussion will be promoted by quoting freely Mr. Farrar's own words in which he gives his opinion as to what should be done in behalf of truth—thus: "Restore the ancient belief in an intermediate state; correct the glaring and most unhappy translation of our English version; judge the words of our blessed Lord by the most ordinary rules of honest and unprejudiced interpretation; abstain from pressing the literal acceptance of passages most obviously metaphorical; give due weight to the countless passages of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation which speak of a love, and a mercy, and a triumph of long-suffering over offended justice which are to us irreconcilable with the belief that the unhappy race of God's children in this great family of man are all but universally doomed to endless torturing, at the very thought of which the heart faints and is sick with horror; give to the reason and the conscience of man some voice in judging of a scheme which seems to outrage all that is noblest and holiest within them; separate from the notion of "hell" (if the word be restored to its ancient sense) the arbitrary

fancies of human ignorance and human passion; accept the merciful opinion, which the church has always permitted though she has not formally adopted them—that the fire of Gehenna is metaphorical; that there is a possibility of future purification; that most men will at last be saved; hold that, as the word "damnation" once implied, the *pœna damni, i. e.*, the loss (it may be forever) of the beatific vision, is—far more than any *pœna sensus* or physical torture, the essence of the sufferings of the lost:—Do this, and you have removed the greatest of all stumbling-blocks to the path of faith and added incomparably to our love of God and to the peace, the hope, the dignity, the happiness of human life." (Preface to "Eternal Hope," pages 25–27.)

The sensible reader will be impressed with the prominence, not to say the excess of rhetoric in this statement. On a certain class of readers—perhaps a somewhat large class—Mr. Farrar's rhetoric will be mightier than his logic. Yet my sense of propriety revolts from the idea of discussing such a subject rhetorically. I write for those who seek truth only and who have discernment enough to see that truth must be sought from the Scriptures, in the best exercise of good sense and reason—which means logic, not rhetoric, and which recognizes our responsibility to God to deal honestly with his revealed word and honestly as toward our fellow-beings whose eternal destinies, this revealed Word and this only can make known.

My plan forbids my reviewing Canon Farrar's entire volume in detail. The utmost I can propose is to put his main points into systematic form, and then meet them in a general way, suggesting rather than fully developing the points of my reply.

We are at issue on the question:—*Is the impenitent sinner's doom eternal, and after death, irreversible?*

Inasmuch as Mr. Farrar does not argue for annihilation as opposed to an eternal destiny, but lays out his strength to prove the one point of future reformation—"Eternal Hope"—the issue may be reduced to this unit. I shall treat this therefore as the main issue.

Against this doctrine of an eternal and irreversible doom, Mr. Farrar assumes and asserts:

1. That it *rests on insulated Scripture texts—few in number and of doubtful import.*

2. That it is *not sustained but is virtually disproved by the general current of Scripture teaching*—the proof texts for its

support being wrested from their context and thereby misinterpreted.

3. That it is *inconsistent with the infinite love of God toward his moral creatures.*

4. That it is *condemned and therefore precluded by the voice of human reason which he holds to be essentially the voice of God.*

Other collateral arguments, incidental to these main points, may receive attention in the sequel.

1. He claims that it rests on insulated texts, few in number and of doubtful import.

These texts may be readily classified, for they treat—(*a.*) Of the *place* of the sinner's doom;——(*b.*) Of the *nature* of his sufferings;——(*c.*) Of their *duration.*

(*a.*) His criticisms upon the scriptural terms for the *place*—Sheol; Hades; Gehenna; hell, etc., are of far less real value than he seems to assume. What if the Scriptures had given no name whatever to the place of the sinner's doom? This would not affect its certainty or its fearfulness in the least. Jesus describes it (Matt. 25: 41): "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Here is no name of *place,* yet what words could be stronger or more fearful than these?——Sometimes he said—"into outer darkness where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 8: 12 and 13: 42, 50 and 22: 13). What would it avail though this "outer darkness" have no described locality, no uniform designation by name? ——So the sinner's future doom as given by the Revelator John depends in no manner whatever upon any name for its *place.* He says—"Shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev. 21: 8); but mainly describes them as "without" [outside] "the golden city," forever debarred—"for into that city shall in nowise enter any thing that defileth, nor worketh abomination;" "without where are sorcerers, whoremongers, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" (21: 27 and 22: 14, 15).

Mr. Farrar seems to assume that there can be nothing very terrible in hell because the original words Sheol and Hades are sometimes used for the under-world, with no special reference to its being a state of suffering. Also that nothing can be certainly known from the word "Gehenna" and nothing very fearful can be within its meaning because originally and by etymology, it was the beautiful valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem. Some readers may not be

aware that this once beautiful valley became desecrated by the burning of children there in honor of Moloch; that then, as an antidote to its idolatrous associations, Josiah defiled it with all the sewerage of the city—dead carcasses, and all most filthy things, and kept up a perpetual fire whose ascending smoke, coupled with those reeking abominations, became a symbol for the place and the doom of lost souls.——Now it is idle to object that a name which suggests foulness and all abominations, coupled with perpetual burnings, "where their worm dieth not and the fire is never quenched"—"an abhorring unto all the living" (Isa. 66: 24)—moreover, lying outside the peace, purity and joy of the holy city—is not the right sort of word for the place of the sinner's final punishment. Or to put my point in a more general form, it indicates any thing else rather than candor and good sense to assume that the name or names for the place and state of the lost, must have no roots in the material things of the present world. A word which should have no such roots would be a word with no imbedded thought or suggestive force in it, and Canon Farrar would then object that it meant nothing.

In usage this word, "Gehenna," is almost peculiar to our Lord—used by him chiefly. With but a single exception (James 3: 6) it is used by him only. Of the recorded cases Matthew has seven (including 10: 28 and 18: 9 and 23: 33); Mark has three (9: 43, 45, 47); and Luke one (12: 5).

Thus it will be seen that the certainty and fearfulness of the sinner's future doom are in no degree weakened in force by small criticisms upon the names given in some passages to its locality.

(*b.*) As to the *nature of his sufferings.*

Canon Farrar is horrified at the idea that physical suffering should be any part of the doom of the lost.——For purposes of rhetoric merely (apart from all logic), this view of the sinner's punishment may enlist sympathy in his behalf and odium against the righteous government that punishes. But at bottom the real argument, if it have any logical force, must assume either (1) That God has no right to punish sinners at all; or (2) No right to inflict suffering which shall be seen to come from his hand and to signify his displeasure against sin, and thus be something else besides the inevitable reaction of sin upon the sinner himself.——It would be candid in Mr. Farrar to meet the issue on one or

both of these points. Certainly he might have spared his rhetoric over mere bodily suffering; for who does not know that "the spirit of a man can sustain his [physical] infirmity; but a wounded spirit, who can bear?"

That the passages which speak of the wicked as being in fire are figurative, metaphorical, is rendered probable by these circumstances: (*a.*) That the destruction of Sodom is in various passages, apparently the illustrative example; (*b.*) That other figures (*e. g.*)—darkness, expulsion from the feast, banishment from the heavenly city—are also used as well as fire.——With these facts we may couple the certainty that in some part at least, sin will beget its own torment; for the spirit of hate and selfishness is essentially self-torturing. Developed socially, it must forever react (as we see it here) in sharp resistance, responsive hatred and more intensified selfishness: while as developed toward God, who can measure the horrors of conscious guilt and remorse; the sense of ineffable folly, shame and self-condemnation for having committed one's self to mad and vain rebellion against infinite Power and infinite Love!

(*c.*) *Of their duration.*

Finite human thought has two methods of conceiving and expressing extreme duration; viz.: (*a.*) By comparison with things most permanent—of longest known continuance; (*b.*) By denying to it any possible termination. Under the former we have "ages upon ages," world-existences, accumulated indefinitely. We have also comparisons with things that lapse of time is never known to impair; *e. g.*, the everlasting mountains; the ever-enduring sun and moon.

(*b.*) More satisfactory to the mind and therefore very common is the denial of any end;—endless; ages without end. ——Mr. Farrar rests his denial of endless punishment upon the assumed weakness of the first above named mode of conception and statement. I recall no notice of the second mode in his volume. [The reader is left to judge for himself of the reasons for this omission.]

The testimony in the word "aionios" receives large attention. He insists that it means, not everlasting but only age-long, which must be always limited, and may be relatively a short duration. On this point there is very little occasion to follow him with counter-criticism and refutation.——The great facts bearing on the question—which he ought not to but does mostly or quite ignore—are such as these: (*a.*) Aionios and its cognates in common usage denote the longest

duration possible to the case—a duration which men think of as unending; *e. g.*, aionian to a slave is life-long, for it can not possibly be longer;—to mountains is world-long—while the world stands, and said with no thought of the world's coming to an end. On this principle of usage, said of punishment, its duration is measured by that of the government which punishes—of the throne against which the imprisoned sufferer is in rebellion.

(*b.*) The aionian punishment of the wicked is compared and contrasted with the aionian blessedness of the righteous. In the same breath spoken, in the same connection, in the same grammatical construction—the same word, by all just laws of interpretation, should have the same meaning—should signify the same duration. This point of the argument applies (as is well known) to Matt. 25: 46;—the words of our Lord himself: "These into everlasting punishment; those into everlasting life."

(*c.*) The great question on the Greek words for eternal (the noun aion and the adjective aionios) is one of usage, and especially of New Testament usage. The only satisfactory and right way of settling such a question is to examine, classify and count the actual cases of usage, and thus decide on the basis of fact how the New Testament writers really employ this class of words.

Employed to signify duration we find both the noun aion (commonly with its preposition eis [unto]—unto eternity) and the adjective aionios (eternal).

The cases of usage fall naturally into three classes; (1) as applied to the existence, attributes, glory of God; (2) applied to the destiny of the righteous; (3) applied to the destiny of the wicked.

The count of cases of usage in this classification show that the noun *aion* (*a*) is applied to God *thirty-six times*; (*b*) to the destiny of the righteous *nine times*; (*c*) to the destiny of the wicked *five times*.

That the adjective "aionios" (*a*) is applied to God five times; (*b*) to the destiny of the righteous fifty-six times; (*c*) to the destiny of the wicked seven times.*

* The cases are as follows:

I. Of *aion*. (*a*). Applied to God; Matt. 6: 13; Luke 1: 33; Acts 15: 18; Rom. 1: 25 and 9: 5 and 11: 36 and 16: 27; 2 Cor. 9: 9 and 11: 31; Gal. 1: 5; Eph. 3: 21; Phil. 4: 20; 1 Tim. 1: 17; 2 Tim. 4: 18; Heb. 1: 8 and 5: 6 and 6: 20 and 7: 17, 21, 24, 28; 1 Pet. 1: 23, 25 and 4: 11 and 5: 11 and 2 Pet. 3: 18; Rev. 1: 6,

Now with these facts before us, it behooves us to move cautiously, reverently, and very honestly in any attempt to break the force of this class of words, used for the duration of the sinner's doom.

But high above all other considerations and proofs for the strict eternity of the sinner's doom stand the testimonies lying in the second line of conception and statement, above alluded to, viz., those which explicitly deny all termination to his state—all possible change in his doom from death to life: "He that believeth not the Son *shall not see life*, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3: 36). "I say unto you that none of those men that were bidden [and would not come] shall taste of my supper" (Luke 11: 24). "Neither can they pass to us that would come from thence" (Luke 16: 26).

On this point the Old Testament is by no means silent: "He that, being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed and *that without remedy*" (Prov. 29: 1). "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death" (Prov. 14: 32).

All termination is denied with similar force when the words speak of the agencies and means of their punishment; *e. g.*, "The fire that never shall be quenched"; "where their worm dieth not" (Mark 9: 43–48). It is a weak argument that concedes an eternal prison and everlasting burnings,

18 and 4: 9, 11 and 5: 13, 14 and 10: 6 and 7: 12 and 11: 15 and 15: 7.

(*b.*) Aion used for the duration of the destiny of the righteous: John 4: 14 and 6: 51, 58 and 8: 51, 52 and 10: 28 and 11: 26; 1 John 2: 17; Rev. 22: 5.

(*c.*) Aion used for the duration of the destiny of the wicked: 2 Pet. 2: 17 and Jude 13; Rev. 14: 11 and 19: 3 and 20: 11—the last of Satan and his angels; but compare Matt. 25: 41.

II. *Aionios:* (*a*). Used of the existence, attributes and glory of God;—Rom. 16: 26; 1 Tim. 6: 16 and Heb. 9: 14; 1 John 1: 2 and 5: 20.

(*b.*) Of the blessedness of the righteous: Matt. 19: 16, 29 and 25: 46; Mark 10: 17; John 4: 14; Mark 10: 30 and Luke 18: 30 and 10: 25 and 18: 18 and 16: 9; John 3: 15, 16, 36 and 5: 24, 39 and 4: 36 and 6: 27, 40, 47, 54, 68 and 10: 28 and 12: 25, 50 and 17: 2, 3; Acts 13: 46, 48; Rom. 2: 7 and 5: 21 and 6: 22, 23; 1 Tim. 1: 16; 2 Cor. 4: 17, 18 and 5: 1; Gal. 6: 8; 2 Thess. 2: 16; 1 Tim. 6: 12, 19; Titus 1: 2 and 2: 10 and 3: 7; Philemon 15; Heb. 5: 9 and 9: 12, 15 and 13: 20; 1 Peter 5: 10 and 2 Peter 1: 11; 1 John 2: 25 and 3: 15 and 5: 11, 13; Jude 21; Rev. 14: 6.

(*c*). Of the destiny of the wicked:—Matt. 18: 8 and 25: 41, 46; Mark 3: 29; 2 Thess. 1: 9; Heb. 6: 2; Jude 7.

but denies eternal imprisonment and endless suffering to any sinner. The supposition that the prison-house stands eternally empty and that its darkness shuts around nothing, is little better than an insult to the common sense of mankind.

What more need be said or well could be to put this point of eternal duration beyond all question?

Mr. Farrar seems to make great account of his point that the passages which affirm the sinner's doom are few in number.——We might answer—What, then? Suppose they are. How many times must the Supreme Ruler affirm it to make it valid? How many repetitions of human law making murder punishable with death are necessary to justify the court in passing sentence? Really, is not this objection a petty trifling with the word of God?——He admits that the synoptical gospels (the first three) have a few rather strong sayings—in speaking of which, however, he scarcely notices that those most fearful words are from the lips of Jesus himself. But when he comes to John's gospel, the darkness is lifted; almost every thing is light; John scarcely speaks of hell at all—in all which he quietly ignores these circumstances; (*a.*) That John purposely supplements the first three gospels, omitting for the most part what they have fully recorded; and (*b.*) That his avowed purpose to write up the testimony to the Messiahship of Jesus (John 20: 31) led him to other themes.——In the same line of argument he intimates that Paul and the other apostles say but little about hell, he carefully overlooking the circumstance that their epistles were all addressed to Christians; not to godless sinners; and that consequently, allusion to the doom of the wicked is incidental, and therefore comparatively seldom. He might, however, have found something on this subject in the Revelation of John. But really this sort of argument lacks dignity and due respect, not only to the Scriptures in general, but in particular, to the testimony of Jesus. Is it really of so little account, that Jesus, the Son of God, has spoken on this momentous, this awful subject, so solemnly, so fully, with such surpassing clearness and emphasis?

II. The common doctrine, Mr. F. claims, is *not sustained but is virtually disproved by the general current of Scripture teaching, the proof-texts for its support being wrested from their context, and thus utterly misinterpreted.* This objection is put in the strongest manner possible to his rhetoric—one might say the boldest and strongest possible to the English tongue. In the passage quoted above, he puts among the first things

he would have done, these: "Judge the words of our blessed Lord by the most ordinary rules of honest and unprejudiced interpretation," etc. (Preface, p. 26.)—In his central sermon on "Hell—what it is not," he says: "Those texts" [on which the common doctrine rests] "are, in the first place, alien to the broad unifying principle of Scripture; also, are founded on interpretations which have appeared to many wise men to be demonstratively groundless; that for every one so quoted, two can be adduced whose *prima facie* and literal interpretation tells on the other side." He adduces what he calls "an old, sensibly admitted rule of interpretation"—that "phrases which belong to metaphor, to imagery, to poetry, to emotion, are not to be formulated into necessary dogma or crystallized into rigid creed. Tested by this rule, nine-tenths of the phrases on which these views are built fall utterly to the ground."—"I protest at once and finally against this ignorant tyranny of isolated texts which has ever been the curse of Christian truth, the glory of narrow intellects, and the cause of the worst errors of the worst days of the corrupted church."——Sometimes he speaks words of real and precious truth, only they are entirely inapplicable to his purpose—*e. g.*, "our guide is the scriptures of God in their broad outlines; the revelation of God in its glorious unity; the books of God in their eternal simplicity, read by the illumination of the Spirit of Christ which dwelleth in us except we be reprobates. Our guide is not and never shall be what the Scripture calls 'the letter that killeth,' the tyrannous realism of ambiguous metaphor, the asserted infallibility of isolated words." Also this: "You must take words and interpret words in their proper and historical significance, not in that sense which makes them connote to you a thousand notions which did not originally belong to them."—— This is very sensible, sustaining mightily the doctrine he impugns; demolishing the doctrine he would build up.

Summing up his strong points (pp. 205, 206), he speaks of "the constant perversion of Scripture by the attempt to build up infinite systems out of metaphorical expressions and isolated texts. I have said we must be guided, not by texts torn from their context, but by the whole tenor and scope of revelation."—"I care but little in any controversy for the stress laid on one or two isolated and dubious texts out of the sacred literature of fifteen hundred years. They may be torn from their context; they may be distorted; they may be irrelevant."

The principles of interpretation here laid down or assumed are partly true and partly not true. His application of them is, in my view, utterly unfounded and misleading.—As made against the views and the men he opposes, they are entirely gratuitous. As bearing upon his own staple argument, they are (logically considered) very unfortunate and even fatal to his cause. For the texts on which the common view rests, so far from being torn from and forced against their context, derive their full and fe rful power from their context. It is precisely by virtue of their context that they are strong, invincible, impregnable. No reader ever feels their full, tremendous force till he studies and estimates them in the light of their connection. The power of those momentous words, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into everlasting life," turns on the facts of the context—the facts, namely, that they come by anticipation from the lips of the Great Judge himself, who of all beings in the universe should be presumed to know; that they are precisely the final sentence, to be passed when "the dead, small and great, shall stand before God;" "when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations;" when *for cause* fully assigned, the wicked shall have heard their final sentence: "Depart accursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;"—and, to go back yet further, in a connection which sets forth, by one parable, that neglect of opportunities is fatal, and by another, that men, bearing great trusts but guiltily failing to meet them, are therefore doomed as unprofitable servants to the destiny of outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Thus the ground ideas of the final judgment are illustrated in the foregoing context. Now to claim that the closing words of this judgment scene are isolated, torn out from their connect on, and therefore wrested from their true sense by misinterpretation, may, perhaps, have weight with those who have never read the passage. How it can have force with those who have read it surpasses my conception.

Again, there is a group of parables in Matt. 13: 24–50, various in imagery but one in thought, culminating in the momentous issues of final destiny: "So shall it be at the end of the world: The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing

of teeth."—Are these parables altogether irrelevant to the final destiny of our race? Is it wresting them from their context, divorcing them from their declared purpose, to apply them to the scenes and results of the last judgment? Can it be claimed with any force of reason that these clear and cogent representations have nothing to do with the moral kingdom of God in our world? Observe that Jesus introduces them by saying, "The kingdom of heaven is *like* the man sowing good seed;" is *like* the net cast into the sea and gathering good and bad. Will it be claimed that Jesus had no right to teach, or even attempt to teach, the facts of his moral kingdom, including the final destiny of the human race, by means of parables? It is pretended that parables have no reliable significance, and that Christ must have been too wise to teach the final issues of his moral kingdom by means of such illustrations! It may be convenient for Canon Farrar quietly to assume this and to ignore all the evidence they embody; but would it be prudent for him to formulate and father this objection, upon which really most of his strong rhetoric is built? For who does not know that the true sense of Christ's parables is indefinitely more sure than the significance of any single word can be, and far less liable to fluctuation under the lapse of time and the influences which modify language? Let the man who would impeach the wisdom of Jesus in his abundant use of parables stand forth before earth and heaven to sustain the impeachment!

Out of our Lord's numerous parables, Luke has preserved to us several, the points of which are put with matchless suggestiveness and force; *e. g.*, that which opens—"Strive" [unto agony] "to enter the narrow gate; for many, I say unto you, will (hereafter) seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Why unable? He proceeds to give prospectively and as to form, dramatically, their efforts and negotiations to gain admission: "When once the master of the house is risen up and *hath shut to the door*, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us; and he shall answer and say, I know you not whence ye are;"—and they, still pressing their suit, shall plead—"We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets;" and he shall reply—"I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity;" "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when ye shall see Abraham and all the

prophets in the kingdom of God and ye yourselves thrust out." Is there any lack of definite significance in this showing? Or will it be said that in applying this illustration to prove that the destiny of the lost is hopeless, we tear it from its context? Ah, but the context clinches its application to this very case. This whole showing is here at all only because a bystander inquired: "Lord, are there few that be saved?" And Jesus replied—in substance—Suppress all idle curiosity and struggle for the life of your soul to gain the narrow entrance; for I tell you, many will be too careless to succeed; and many will deceive themselves with hopes that must end in awful disappointment. "When once the master of the house is risen up and hath shut the door, the workers of iniquity will press their plea for admission, forever in vain." For let the reader notice that this shutting of the door is not presented here as a trivial and merely incidental circumstance. Observe, Christ does not say, after the door has been shut; nor after the servant shall have shut it; but after the master of the house has risen up in his supreme authority and majesty, and has closed the door with his own determined, resistless hand. This form of statement gives tremendous emphasis to the transaction. Let no man rashly assume that this door will fly open again very readily as if its being shut had no special significance!

We have another supposed case built on an Oriental custom common in the Roman world of the Christian age—a great supper; many guests invited; of whom not a few, for frivolous, not to say insulting reasons, *would not come.* The Lord of the feast, in great displeasure, bids his servants call in the poor, and the men of the highways; but solemnly declares of those who had scornfully refused his call—Not a man of them shall taste of my supper!——Now it is certainly legitimate to look here for Christ's answer to our great question—whether refusing to obey the gospel call becomes a finality; carries with it a hopeless loss—a rejection by the Great Master of the gospel feast which can never be reversed? The ministers of Christ's gospel have been wont to utilize this parable for warning to sinners to listen to love's call while it is yet to-day. So doing, have they torn the passage out of its context? Have they laid themselves open to the scathing rebuke of Canon Farrar for misinterpreting their Master's words? They will answer:—We carefully studied the context. We found the parable suggested by

the casual remark of a bystander:—"Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." This, then, is the starting point of the parable—the blessedness of sitting round the heavenly board; and the wretchedness of final, everlasting failure. Therefore we can not be mistaken; Jesus certainly meant to show that sinful men have opportunities now which must soon pass away forever. *Now* they are invited—invited warmly, generously, sincerely; but persistent neglect, abuse, contemptuous refusal, will prove fatal. The Master does not say—they must be shut out during a certain indefinite, aionian period, after which they will be again welcome to enter; but he says—Not one of those men shall taste of my supper! The exclusion is absolute and final.

The main points in the case of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16: 19–31) are made too plain to be innocently misunderstood. Readers of ordinary discernment and honest mind always see that the rich man died and then went into a state of misery—a state of enforced seclusion from the world of the blessed—a state where every prayer is unavailing—a state from which escape is hopeless, and transition to the better world utterly impossible. A large portion of the candid readers of this passage have believed in its application to the doom of the wicked after death. Canon Farrar arraigns them upon the charge of wresting the passage out of its context, and so perverting its purposed significance. Is this arraignment legitimate? Not at all. For it is precisely the context which determines beyond all dispute the application of this case to the sinner's final doom. Jesus had been pressing rich men to use their riches so as to make friends in heaven to welcome them there at death. The covetous Pharisees—money-loving and money-hoarding—laughed him to scorn for such teaching. "They derided him." Their tight fingers should never relax their grasp upon worldly treasure for such a reason! Their folly and their scorn seem to have moved the heart of the Master to a deep solemnity, and to this plain, faithful, fearful showing of the future doom of the rich man whose hard soul never felt compassion for the sufferers at his door.——Thus the context demonstrates the application and intensifies the significance of this momentous passage. The reader who misses the context misses much of the thrilling power and much of the sense of awful certainty which lies in these words.

These features in Christ's parables seemed to justify the

remark made above that Canon Farrar's arraignment of the common doctrine as tearing its proof-texts out of their context is (logically considered) very unfortunate and even fatal for his cause. If this arraignment should lead Bible students to search out the context of these passages, his arguments would need no further refutation.

Unfortunately for Canon Farrar's candor, or logical power, or exegetical science, he grossly violates his own principles of interpretation. Such wresting of scripture from its context; such construction put upon it in utter disregard of its original intent and real sense, we must needs go far to find in the ranks of professed Bible critics. For example: To disprove eternal punishment and to prove "Eternal Hope," he quotes Rev. 21: 4, 5 and 22: 3: "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."——"And there shall be no more curse."——Thus what God said of the righteous and of the righteous only—of heaven and of heaven only—he applies to the wicked. Is not this a flagrant wresting of scripture? What could be worse?

Again, he finds it written in scripture: "For I will not contend forever, neither will I be always wroth; for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made." (Isaiah 57: 16.) Therefore he infers that God's wrath against lost sinners will not be eternal. What God's servants spake of the brief disciplinary sufferings of his people in time, Canon Farrar assumes to be legitimately applicable to the retributions of the incorrigibly wicked which God affirms to be eternal.

Canon Farrar has the faculty of reading his doctrine of "Eternal Hope" into almost every thing he finds in the Bible. He says—"To adduce all the passages which deepen in my mind the trust in "Eternal Hope" would be to transcribe one-half of the Scriptures." His book closes with a group of these proof texts (some six pages—219–224). Some of these are simply prophetic of the ultimate ascendency of Christ's gospel reign upon this earth—the millennium; some speak of God's agencies in his earthly providences toward his people for discipline and correction; *e. g.*, Psalms 103: 9: "He will not always chide, nor keep his anger forever;" and Mic. 7: 18: "He retaineth not his anger forever because he delighteth in mercy." Some teach unlimited as opposed to limited atonement; *e. g.*, John 1: 29 and 3:

17 and 1 John 2: 2. Others, what is called the "restitution of all things" spoken of by the prophets, etc. (Acts 3: 21); yet others, Christ's ultimate supremacy and the subjugation of all things under him, as Phil. 2: 10, 11, etc.

It can not be necessary to expose the perversion of such passages when they are applied to the final doom of the lost.

III. We come to the third staple objection, viz., *that it is inconsistent with God's infinite love for his creatures.*

I approach this subject, oppressed with a sense of its magnitude, and awed with the feeling of reverence which my reason tells me it should inspire.

Compelled to the utmost brevity, I must for the most part leave the reader to expand and apply the points I suggest.

1. There is no issue over the *fact* of God's infinite love for his creatures. The issue made respects only the bearings of this fact upon the punishment of sin.

2. On this point it becomes us to inquire and judge modestly and humbly, under a sense that God is wiser and better than man; that nothing is deep beyond his knowledge; that nothing in human character or conduct is too intricate for his just and wise decision.

3. For these reasons it is safer for us to learn what we can from his known agencies in providence and grace, rather than attempt to infer what he ought to do from our notion of what we would do in his case. Sometimes men are scarcely aware how much they tacitly assume that God ought to do what they think they would do in like circumstances—which virtually assumes that man can judge as well as God can, or better.

4. Studying God's actual ways, we meet first of all this remarkable fact—that he manifestly works against sin, rather than against suffering. He seems to hate sin far more than he recoils from suffering. He manifestly cares more to save from sin than to save from suffering. Or, to put this in yet other form, he cares more to make human life pure than painless; works rather to make good character than to make sound, unsuffering bodies. All which amounts to saying that he aims and works toward the greater good rather than the less; and for this should have the credit of both wisdom and love.

Now this is one of the great points in which his estimate of values (valuable things) differs radically, almost totally, from that of men. For men are wont to have indefinitely more repugnance to suffering than to sin; to work rather

against suffering than against sin; to study and seek present pleasure more than present virtue. Alas! what thousands of our race—fathers, mothers, magistrates—forget, that the softness of sensibility which can not endure to inflict pain for the sake of moral purity and more noble character, is a weakness, and is not either wisdom or love. Let us adore the Infinite Father that He is above making this ruinous mistake in the training of his moral children; that He never can sink into this infinite folly!

5. Men sometimes forget (what God never forgets)—that good or bad character is made here *for eternity*, and so must long *outlast* and therefore infinitely outweigh the transient sufferings of earthly moral discipline. Paul had a sense of it, shown in the words—"Our light affliction which is for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4: 17).

Many will admit this as applied to discipline, but will then insist that suffering inflicted for exemplary retribution comes not under the same principle at all, especially if these sufferings are eternal in duration.——To which I must answer briefly—that retributive inflictions, being exemplary in their purpose, are as really benevolent as disciplinary suffering; that prevention is no less wise and good than cure; that sin being what it is, no human government has ever been sustained, or ever can be, without exemplary punishment, and it is arrant presumption in man to assume that God's moral government can be; and finally, that God knows better than we do how many myriads of his intelligent creatures are to be kept from sinning, saved from ruinous moral fall, by the example of eternal retribution upon rebels hopelessly mad and fixed in their rebellion.

I am well aware that it is fashionable to disparage the influence of fear as if it were worthless toward virtue. I admit that neither the fear of suffering nor the suffering itself will bring devils to repentance, nor does it often turn toward virtue human souls far gone toward hopeless moral hardihood. The fact of its failure only shows how far they have gone toward incorrigible rebellion. But the yet unsinning do feel its power, and, indeed, so do all those whose reclamation to virtue is still within hope. Apparently this is about all that God can expect from retributive suffering.

6. Restating and better formulating the principles here involved, let me say—that in God's present ways of providence, shown here before our eyes, we learn (if anywhere)

his character and his eternally future policy; that the sufferings of our race, coming from God's hand in this world (either by infliction or permission) are manifestly and most certainly for good, moral purposes, and for these only; that they are all comprised in one or the other of these two classes —viz., for discipline or for retribution; that is to say, either to make the sufferer less sinful and more virtuous if so he will, or if he will not, then to deter others from sinning by his exemplary punishment. Therefore all the sufferings of the race in this world—all that are traceable to God's hand—look toward the lessening of sin and toward more and purer virtue, in the sufferer's own person if his improvement be hopeful—*i. e.*, morally possible; and in the case of others than the sufferer, if his improvement have become hopeless and his sufferings therefore become purely retributive.

Now it is simply undeniable that God works on these principles in the present world. It is therefore inferrible that he works on the same principles in all future worlds. The great problem of time and of earth, put in its simplest terms, is to determine who is and who is not incorrigible; who will and who will not take God's discipline kindly and submit to be made better, purer, holier thereby. Discipline to the docile is a blessing; to the rebellious, by their perversion, a fearful curse. Discipline gives place to retribution only when it must; then the sufferings of retribution are utilized in wisdom and love for the prevention of preventable sin, whether in a fallen race, yet within reach of remedial agencies, or toward the unfallen, of whom God may have untold myriads already under moral training, and yet unborn myriads more, to be created and then morally trained and kept in obedience.

The only plausible objection to this reasoning will be that eternal suffering in the case of the lost is too dear a price for wisdom to contract for and for love to endure for the sake of the holiness of creatures in God's universal kingdom. It thus becomes a question, not of principle, but of quantity.

The answer is—Who can judge of the quantity so well as God himself? What mortal mind shall presume to know how many worlds of moral agents are taking moral lessons from the retributions sent of God upon sinners of our race and upon the fallen angels? and who has estimated the farther question—how many more worlds of moral agents, yet unborn, may find homes in the starry universe and may learn great moral lessons when God shall have carried into

effect his sublime "intent that unto principalities and powers in the heavenly places might be made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God?" (Eph. 3: 10.)

IV. The fourth objection to the common doctrine is that it is forbidden by the voice of reason within us, which (it is claimed) is itself the voice of God.

This objection should be met with candor and discussed with careful discrimination.

On this, as on the preceding points, the question is not as to the *fact* that God has made us capable to a certain extent of reasoning and judging as to what is morally right; but is rather upon the limitations of this faculty and the conditions of its reliable exercise.

All my arguments made thus far assume that our reasoning faculties may legitimately be exercised upon these problems —nay more, must and should be. God himself not only permits, but invites us to judge of his moral ways. Thus through Ezekiel: "Are not my ways equal? Are not your ways unequal?" (Ezek. 18: 25, 29, and 33: 17, 20.) Also through Isaiah (5: 3, 4): "O men of Israel, judge, I pray you, between me and my vineyard. What could I have done to my vineyard (for its perfect culture) that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?"—So also Jesus (Luke 12: 57): "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?"

But the Scriptures—*i. e.*, God speaking through them—assume that man's reason and conscience may be perverted. Paul wrote to Titus (1: 15): "Unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled." Jesus said (John 3: 19, 20): "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men have loved darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil; for every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reproved" —which shows that man's heaviest curse comes upon him because of his purposed self-blinding of mind and self-hardening of heart, both caused by his voluntary loving of sin. Paul also (Rom. 1: 28): "Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind;" and yet again (2 Thess. 2: 10, 11): "Because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved, for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie."—Most manifestly, therefore,

man's moral state, as truth-loving or truth hating, must powerfully affect his moral judgments upon the ways of God. Consequently, other things being equal, the reliability of man's moral judgments as to the justice of God's ways will be as his moral sympathy with God in character—will be as his real virtue; in other words, as his appreciation and approval of God's moral government, of which government the blessedness of benevolent moral character is—as to his creatures—the one supreme end. On the other hand, in whatever degree man puts himself in sympathy with rebellion against God, he disqualifies himself for right moral judgments on the question of punishment.

"No man e'er felt the halter draw
With good opinion of the law."

Of this fact in sinning natures there can be not the least doubt.—If it be said, this fact impeaches the wisdom of the Creator, the resistless reply is that it lies in the essential nature of moral action. It can never be shown—it is vain, therefore, to assume—that God could create a moral being exempt from the fearful possibility of the self-perversion of his noble, almost God-like powers.

Again: Inasmuch as our right moral judgments upon the doings of another than ourselves depend upon our knowing the circumstances of the case, it is very obvious that our moral judgments as to God's ways in retribution should be very modest, for the good reason that he is likely to know the circumstances far better than we can. Hence our judgments of God's ways, as compared with his judgments of his own ways, must be reliable, and therefore valuable in the compound ratio of our knowledge compared with his, and of our intrinsic righteousness of character compared with his. If it should be the case that our knowledge of the circumstances is infinitesimally small compared with his, we shall be (by so much) more liable to misjudge than he is. So on the point of personal righteousness; if we fall indefinitely below him, so must fall also the relative value of our moral judgments as to his ways in the punishment of sin.

It deserves special notice that when God said through Ezekiel—"Are not my ways equal?"—and through Isaiah —"O men of Judah, judge, I pray you, between me and my vineyard," the case to be estimated lay patent before their eyes. The agencies of his visible providence towards them at that time formed the subject of estimation and

judgment. He was not asking their judgment upon a case the facts of which they could not know.

Over against this, it does not appear that God has anywhere proposed to men to judge of the justice or wisdom, or even the benevolence of his policy of eternal punishment. It is at least supposable that, before he should do this, He would take account of the necessary limitations of our knowledge as to the circumstances upon which even a proximate judgment as to these points must rest.

Will it be said or assumed that retribution for sin is essentially vicious in principle and therefore always wrong? Let us not leap to this conclusion rashly. Does human reason condemn the very principle itself of exemplary, retributive punishment? No human civil government since the world began has been a success without it. Therefore it is simple folly to assume that God ought to manage his moral government without it.

Or put the case thus: It is certainly presumable (and in my belief demonstrable) that God sends no sinner to hell whom he can wisely save—none until he sees that his best remedial agencies in his behalf are powerless. Then it is kindness to such sinners to stop their sinning on earth and stay their further accumulation of guilt here; and kindness to the world to shut off their pernicious influence.——Then and thenceforward, it becomes a practical question to the divine mind—What shall be done with that incorrigible sinner? How shall his future existence be utilized for any good whatever to the moral universe?——Does it shock our moral judgment to suppose that God's answer to this question is;—"Make of him an example to deter others from mad rebellion? The universe needs such examples. Other moral agents will be blessed by such moral lessons. This doom is righteously due for such guilt as his, and is demanded by the exigencies of my moral kingdom."

Now of these exigencies it is reasonable to say that God knows more than the most far-seeing of mortals.

Here I can not withhold a mild criticism upon Canon Farrar's looseness in his use of staple words—*e. g.*, "conscience." It is generally agreed to use this word for a man's own moral sense considered as passing decisions upon his own moral states and acts. It is a faculty for *self-judging*;—self-approving, or self-condemning. But my conscience never judges *another's* moral acts—not even another man's; far less God's.——Right use of words conduces not a little

to right thinking, as all vicious usage does to vicious conclusions. When Canon Farrar speaks of man's conscience as passing judgment upon God's ways, he tacitly assumes that man's moral judgments upon God are just as valid as his moral judgments upon himself—than which nothing can be more false, delusive to man, abusive to God.

Passing this minor criticism, let us note;—While the common doctrine of christendom has always been that the revealed word of God is the only infallible rule of faith and so of truth as to God's treatment of sin and of sinners, Canon Farrar finds other Bibles and other sources of reliable knowledge. He "believes that reason, conscience and experience are books of God which must have a direct voice in these great decisions" (p. 53).——Again; "What the Bible teaches as a whole; what the Bibles [plural] teach as a whole—for History, and Conscience and Nature and Experience—these, too, are sacred books;—that, and that only, is the immutable law of God" (p. 206).

Time would fail me to canvass the divine authority of these four new Bibles on the point of their teachings as to future punishment. But let it be at least suggested that, even conceding to them some legitimate bearing, perhaps Canon Farrar has misread their lessons. Has profane history borne no testimony to the fact that nations have rotted down in their own vices and moral corruptions, and have rushed on swiftly to their righteous doom of perdition? Has sacred history, coming from God, witnessed nothing as to the righteous justice of God in terribly exterminating retributions?

Has conscience never testified—I am awfully guilty; I deserve the deepest hell! Has Canon Farrar never known a case in which conscience has filled the human soul with unutterable agony—an agony which seemed to the guilty sufferer to be *just*, and to be scarcely less dreadful than hell itself?

Again; if we may assume that the human constitution—the physical part especially, yet the mental also—may be one of the chapters in his new Bible called "Nature," then let us ask—Does not every appetite and lust of body testify to the wreck and ruin of sin? Do they not with awful voice witness to the self-perpetuating power of this wasting and desolation? Man's faculties as made by his Maker are noble, almost God-like; but who does not know that by sinful abuse they become inlets and sources of unutterable

anguish? Do not such physical and moral wrecks of humanity utter some voice, not only upon the justice of punishment, but upon its nature and its inevitableness?

Time fails me to follow Canon Farrar further in the line of direct criticism and refutation.——It is in place, however, to suggest some considerations which bear strongly *against* the hope of another probation and of future repentance, and which consequently serve to confirm the voice of Scripture as to the eternity of future punishment.

1. The *self-perpetuating nature and self-strengthening power of sin.*——This law of sinning natures in fallen beings is no less manifest and undeniable than the fact of sin itself. It were of no use to debate any moral question with the man who denies it. Every-where the awful fact meets and appalls us; every-where the drunkard, the debauchee, the miser, the impenitent, self-hardening hearer of the gospel—as a rule—wax worse and worse. Under a common law—not a law of necessity, and so not a perfectly invariable law, yet one of terrific power, sin hardens the heart for more and guiltier sinning. "He that, being often reproved, hardeneth his neck," moves on naturally towards the doom of a destruction, at once sudden and remediless.——Thus the influences of earthly probation hasten toward a fixedness of moral character which naturally shuts off hope of change, and much more, of reversal, in any world hereafter. Such supposed reversal is utterly against nature, and therefore against hope—all the more so if it shall appear even probable that redemptive influences are pressed in this world by the loving Father fully up to the limit of hopefulness if not even of moral possibility.

2. As already suggested, it is supposable and in my belief demonstrable (nay more, demonstrated with all the evidence possible in an argument built upon God's love and wisdom) —that God presses his efforts to reclaim sinners (while exercising their moral agency) until further effort becomes hopeless. He knows and marks with sorrow the moment when they reach and pass this point. Then even mercy can do for them nothing more. And the assumption that some other moral world will be better constructed for remedial purposes than this is not only gratuitous, but is an impeachment of God's wisdom in framing this. For, beyond all question, this world was framed for remedial, not for penal purposes. And if God made a mistake in shaping its constituent elements, who can say He will succeed better the next time?

If this world, avowedly framed for redemptive work, is yet so imperfect that God must needs try again, what becomes of our confidence in his wisdom?

3. As to the sufferer, penal sufferings are not reformatory, and apparently were never intended or expected to be. In harmony with all our knowledge of incorrigibly rebellious natures, the sacred word testifies (Rev. 16: 9–11) that when "power was given to the fourth angel to scorch men with fire, they blasphemed the name of God and repented not to give him glory"; and that under the outpoured vial of the fifth angel, "they gnawed their tongues for pain and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and of their sores, and repented not to give him glory."

To every candid judge of the case, this appalling fact is chilling to "eternal hope."——The principle applies in its strength to the fallen angels, and is illustrated and verified in their case. If the future world has in it new moral forces toward reform, an advance upon the present world, how happens it that never a fallen angel has felt their moral power? Certainly so far as is known to us, no fallen angel has ever repented and been saved. That he would be saved if he were to repent, need not, for our argument, be denied. But in fact he does not repent. Hell is before his eyes, and is not a thing of mere faith; he knows his future, more awful doom—"Why art thou come to torment us before the time?" (Matt. 8: 29)—yet not a soul of them repents.——Now let this fact be coupled with the revealed truth that lost men have their final destiny along with those lost angels; in the same place, under a form of punishment prepared originally for them; and the doctrine of "eternal hope" for the lost sinners of our world—precious as such hope would be if only there were ground for it—if only God could make place for it in a moral universe—must be burdened with a fearful weight of improbability.

4. We must meet the fact that the Scriptures everywhere *assume* the moral issues of this life to be a *finality*.——Some of the emphatic passages on this point have been brought under notice already—some, but by no means all. Their number is "legion." It is undeniably assumed throughout the Scriptures. With one common voice prophets and apostles proclaim, "Now is the accepted time; now, the day of salvation." "While yet it is called, To-day, harden not your heart."——To the passages already suggested, I have space to add but one more. The force of this depends much on

its connection.——The Revelator John in his two closing chapters puts before us the holy city with its pure and blessed occupants, and in the contrast, the realms *without* where all incorrigible sinners have their home and destiny. He declares that into the holy city nothing morally defiled can ever enter; while in the regions outside, all morally abominable souls have their fit and congenial home. Now it is in this very connection that he utters these memorable words; "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still" (22: 11). Let none hope that the filthy are to be, thereafter, washed from their filthiness, and admitted into the holy city. The awful finality of doom closes forever those celestial gates against hope of moral change in the realms of the lost.

5. The Scriptures are utterly silent as to future, "eternal hope" for sinners dying in their sins.——"The wicked," they declare, "is driven away" [at death] "*in* his wickedness" [not from it]; "but the righteous" (in wide and utter contrast) "hath hope in his death" (Prov. 14: 32).——This unbroken silence as to hope in the sinner's future must be estimated and judged of under the full admission that God is infinitely honest and truthful. If there were grounds for such hope, it is simply inconceivable that God in his revealed word should everywhere ignore—everywhere suppress them. To assume even tacitly that God acts on the Jesuit principle of "doing evil that good may come"—of suppressing the truth and apparently assuming that to be true which is not true, for the sake of a stronger moral pressure upon sinners to repent to-day, is too revolting! I can not bring myself to refute or even discuss it.

6. Another fact of powerful bearing upon this doctrine of "eternal hope" is rarely considered and rarely appreciated in its full force—viz., the deep, intense, and even agonizing earnestness of Jesus and of his faithful apostles and prophets in persuading men to flee from the "wrath to come." Everywhere they speak, they plead, they labor to persuade, as if they felt to the very depth of their souls that the issue is one of life and death—a life eternal, or a death no less eternal. "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord," said Paul, "we persuade men" (2 Cor. 5: 11). "For the space of three years, I ceased not to warn every man, night and day, with tears," (Acts 20: 31).——The prophets speak in God's behalf when, with almost breaking heart they cry;

"How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah," etc.? (Hos. 11: 8).——Most expressive on this point are the words (Jeremiah 13: 15–17): "Hear ye and give ear; be not proud, for the Lord hath spoken. Give glory to the Lord your God before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains; and *while ye look for light*, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness. But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride."——What words could be more telling? If I must fail in every endeavor to warn and to save, I can at least withdraw from among men to bewail in secret places the pride and the perverseness which shut down forever upon all hope!

7. The ground or reason given in the Scriptures for God's long-suffering toward sinners in time assumes that this is man's last moral trial—his last opportunity for salvation. ——That God should let rebels live in peace and prosperity in any world of his, is a fact to be accounted for. The Scriptures do account for it, in precisely one way and one only, viz., that God truly, earnestly longs for their salvation: —"Not willing (in the sense of real, strong desire) that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3: 9).—"Account the long-suffering of the Lord to be salvation"—[in its aim and purpose] (2 Pet. 3: 15). All this implies that here God waits for sinners to repent, to the utmost limit of hope. This limit being reached, there will be no like waiting in the world of doom. God has no thought of any similar long-suffering in the world to come. These facts assume that the sinner's moral choice, made here in time, is a finality.

8. At the final judgment (so the Scriptures show) God will take pains to vindicate, before the assembled universe, his justice in the sinner's eternal doom. So Jesus showed most clearly in his detailed account of the grounds for his sentence respectively against the wicked and in favor of the righteous. (Matt. 25: 34–48.) According to Jude (v. 14, 15) God will vindicate himself before the sinner's own conscience: "To convince all the ungodly of their ungodly deeds, which they have wickedly committed." This would be premature, not to say superfluous, if the great question is not even then settled; if the really *final* issues of probation are then yet to be reached, and the question of repentance and pardon is still lying open.

This group of facts and circumstances—each severally strong; all combined, rising to the force of moral demonstration—must shut off all rational ground for "Eternal Hope" in the case of sinners who prove themselves incorrigible under all the appliances of earthly probation.

Future probation, put hypothetically.

The question of future hope through probation renewed after death, has been recently put before the American public in the somewhat modified form of purely hypothetical statements, as being supposable—a thing that *may be.*

In the outset it will be seen that the putting forth of this hypothesis by professedly Christian men assumes that such speculations are legitimate. If they are so, it must be because the Scriptures have left the question open and unsettled; or because, their testimony on the point, though given clearly, is not decisive authority. For if it be true that the Scriptures have closed the door of hope as to a future probation, and if it be also true and admitted that their authority on the point is final, then such speculations are in nowise legitimate. No friend of God and of truth can rightly indulge himself in making them. They are in their nature too perilous to be made—too certain to be seized upon by sin-loving men for encouragement in persistent sinning through this life, in hope of escape from its consequences by means of the after-probation. Let these points, involved in this alternative, be borne in mind as we proceed.

In the face of them, the new departure sets forth—

1. That it is in the nature of the case *supposable* that probation may be resumed and brought to a focal point immediately after death—when in the effulgence of the new light of the eternal world, the soul may at once, either accept or reject the offer of salvation in Christ, and its ultimate destiny may thus turn upon this after-death decision.

2. That the Scriptures favor this theory inasmuch as Jesus taught that "many who had never heard of him shall be gathered into his kingdom;" and John has said of some "that in the future life they shall see Jesus as he is" (1 Eps. 3: 2).

3. That this theory is sustained by the fact that in the present life multitudes have a very poor chance for salvation—because of their meager or only false light; their untoward surroundings, and their immensely strong sinful passions.

4. As to their bearing upon the hypothesis of renewed

probation, these adverse influences must be judged of in the light of God's infinite love and his consequent infinite desire that all men be saved. From his known character it is inferred that so long as there is hope of reclaiming sinners by means of renewed probation, God will try them with the opportunity, though all earthly agencies and opportunities have proved unavailing.

Against these hypothetical suppositions, and against the points made in their support, it must be said—

1. The Scriptures are not silent, nor is their voice to this point dubious; but they have spoken distinctly, emphatically, decisively. Much of this Scripture testimony has been presented in the previous pages of this essay. Let it suffice here to say that all the parables in which Jesus has set forth the grand and ultimate results of his moral kingdom—all those in which he signifies to us the trusts, talents, opportunities of our earthly life—unite in this one point—that the moral decisions of men as toward God, made in the present life, are final. Jesus could not, by any supposable representations, have made this more clear and decisive than he has. Then again, the state immediately following death is described in the account of the rich man and Lazarus, unmistakably. (Luke 16:19–31.) If such teachings as we have in this chapter do not close the door of hope against future probation, no words can do it.

2. The Scriptures, legitimately interpreted, have nowhere uttered the slightest whisper in favor of such renewed probation, their doctrine being—"After death, the judgment" (Heb. 9:27); after death, "the wicked driven away *in* his wickedness;" while "the righteous" (and he only) "hath hope in his death" (Prov. 14:32). If it be said that we ought not to expect a whisper of it, even though it were true, such a truth being of a dangerous tendency and bearing; then it behooves us to consider whether a doctrine too dangerous to be revealed is not also too dangerous to be true. For, men are to be converted and saved by and through the truth. This is what the truth concerning God and his kingdom is good for: toward this result, all moral truth concerning God and his kingdom converges and none of it can by any possibility be injurious to human souls. That there should be some features of God's character, some points in his scheme for human salvation, which it would be perilous to the race to know, which points are therefore prudently suppressed, is too revolting to be even supposable.

Need I press the points already made and ask—Is the Spirit of inspiration thoroughly frank and honest toward men? Does God press sinners to repent in this "accepted time," *as if there were no other time,* keeping back the real truth as to the future probation, lest it should take the force out of his words of admonition and entreaty? Can we, for a moment, suppose that such tacit suppression of real truth and putting of the case *as it is not* are in harmony with God's eternal veracity and his perfect honesty?

3. The allusions to Scripture testimony (as in No. 2, above), are in my view inept and misleading. Both Jesus and Paul did say that "multitudes who had never heard of Christ should be gathered into his kingdom. But manifestly they said this with reference to Gentiles, then soon to be called in, and not at all with reference to souls past the "bourne" of death. Whoever will take the pains to compare Matt. 8: 11, 12 and Luke 13: 28, 29 and John 11: 52 and 10: 16 and Isa. 52: 15 and 56: 8 and Rom. 9: 24–26 * will see how prominently this calling in of the Gentiles was then before the mind, and how certainly Christ's allusions above referred to, must be applied to this and to

* "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you *yourselves* thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and *from* the west, and from the north, and *from* the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God."

"And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad."

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd."

"So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for *that* which had not been told them shall they see; and *that* which they had not heard shall they consider."

"The LORD God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather *others* to him, beside those that are gathered unto him."

"Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, *that* in the place where it was said unto them, Ye *are* not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God."

nothing else. So also John's words, "Shall see Jesus as he is" are closely and certainly restricted by the context to "Sons of God," and more definitely still, to those who are now—in the present life—his sons: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Can it be legitimate to assume that those of whom Jesus declares—"I never knew you; depart from me," will have this beatific vision? If this is to be accepted as fair Scripture interpretation, what can ever be ruled out as foul?

4. In so far as the speculations now referred to set forth that the present probationary system is badly constituted, and therefore works very imperfectly, so that a better one becomes consequently probable, they disparage the wisdom of God and strangely misrepresent the real facts of the case.——Moreover, in so far as they magnify the force of temptation to the extent of real apology for sinners who yield to its power; and also minify the guilt of sin—real rebellion against God; in so far as they would represent sin as more man's misfortune than his fault, and the sinner's temptations to sin as so overmastering that really God *ought* to give him another—a better and more favorable trial;—these settings forth of the case are in strange antagonism to the doctrine of the Scriptures and to the actual facts.——For consider: The mass of those who reach the point of moral accountability have more time for repentance than they know what to do with, so that very commonly they set themselves to kill time in vanities and dissipations; have more admonitions of various sort than they have patience or heart to heed; have more light to use wisely or to sin against than they have any heart to use well. What the Lord said of Israel, he might truly say of the myriads in gospel lands: "What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?" (Isa. 5: 4).——It would be a long chapter that should merely catalogue the agencies and instrumentalities with which God fills our world, all shaped for purposes of probation and for its successful working and results:—agencies of truth and agencies of providence; agencies of the Spirit of God, superinducing divine power to convict and convert sinful men;—his providences bearing them through scenes of affliction designed and shaped to utilize bereavements, losses, sufferings, and the scenes of death ever before their eyes; all proclaiming

the warnings of God through a thousand tongues;—God himself pressing all these pleas with most patient long-suffering blended with marvelous loving-kindness and mercies —all, that "the goodness of God might lead them to repentance" and that the warnings of God might press them to "flee from the wrath to come."——It is also in God's plan to use the coöperating agencies of his people in this work all through human life from the cradle to the grave. He implores and expects them to utilize all the agencies of example, instruction, persuasion, and all the forces that can be wielded by love, sympathy, faithfulness, to reach the hearts of the sinning and to draw them back to God. If they are less faithful and less successful than they might be, it can never be said that God has not planned well in this great moral scheme; can never be said that he has not brought motives of mightiest power upon their souls to press them to the truest faithfulness and the most earnest endeavor.——But we can scarcely begin to open—we can by no means exhaust this great theme.

If it be said (it has been said and will be again) that a great part of the race thus far have not heard the gospel, to this God himself makes answer:—They who have sinned under law only (not having the gospel) shall be judged by the law; they who have had no written law shall be judged by the unwritten law of their own conscience—"their conscience meanwhile accusing or else excusing" (Rom. 2: 15). ——If it be said, and said truly, that as servants, they "have not known their master's will, they shall be beaten with few stripes"—and this only to the extent (manifestly) of the sense of right and wrong which was in them.——It has been often said that earthly probation is full of diversities and inequalities, running through an almost infinite variety of circumstances and opportunities. Very well, what then? Every soul, having moral accountability, has moral opportunities —he of one talent no less than he of ten. It is by no means necessary to his moral trial that he should have much light rather than little, or little rather than much; much native mental ability rather than little, or little rather than much. It matters not as to the fact or the equity of his moral trial whether he have only the unwritten law of conscience, or this with God's written law besides; or both with all which the revealed gospel supplies. The justice of God will be vindicated if he is judged upon what he has and never upon what he has not. To suppose that God is

either unable or unwilling to adjust future retribution to the light sinned against and to the guilt actually incurred by each individual's own sin, estimated in view of every circumstance affecting his responsibility and measuring his guilt, is to suppose him to be incompetent to the responsibilities of Final Judge. No mortal man, be he God-fearing or God-hating, need have the least fear of incapacity on God's part for the most righteous judgment, or of any, even the least, negligence as to awarding the final sentence upon the deeds of life's probation according to the principles of perfect justice.

It may be thought that the case of infants, dying before moral accountability, should receive notice here. In some of its aspects—not in all—this case is foreign from our theme, and should therefore be treated, if at all, with the utmost brevity.

I suggest the following points:

The Scriptures have said nothing on this subject *directly*. What they say in direct terms has reference to those who reach and who exercise moral agency here. Therefore whatever light they throw upon this subject comes through inference from the principles of God's revealed moral government.

From these principles we may infer—1. That not being sinners, they are not condemned as if they were. There being no demand on the score of justice for their condemnation, they are not condemned.

2. Inasmuch as it is manifestly the law of God's universal moral kingdom to save all whom he wisely can save, and never the least number possible to him but always the greatest number possible; it is certainly within hope—not to say within reasonable expectation—that God has devised some plan under which they may develop their intellectual and moral faculties in the future life in a way to insure their salvation.

3. More definitely still, it is supposable that they are given to Christ as part of that reward promised him for the travail of his soul (Isaiah 53: 11), which shall satisfy the infinite love he has manifested in his self-sacrifice for the race.

4. Of the nature of their probation in the life beyond, we can know nothing definite—whether it involve moral peril, or whether it be certain of good result, we can not know absolutely; but we can commit the issue to God as to One who

never plans unwisely, and never fails to execute through any lack of the resources of power.—So much on the case of infants who did not reach moral accountability in this life.

Let it not be said that this doctrine of something analogous to probation in the case of infants—of the nature of education, involving intellectual and moral development—opens wide the door for a renewed probation after death for all or any of the actual sinners of our race. This would be said (if said) with no reason behind it. For the two cases are utterly unlike, having no elements in common. One probation for all who are or may become moral agents is reasonable; more than one we can see to be utterly unreasonable; more than one would naturally tend to frustrate the legitimate ends of all probation, and hence could not be either wise or good.—Moreover, probation under any circumstances whatever tends mightily toward fixedness of moral character; and in so far, renders any supposable renewal by a second probation extremely improbable. But one probation must naturally come to all. Infants dying before they reach it here, must naturally, not to say necessarily, enter upon it when in the natural development of their constitutional powers they come to know God and his moral claims upon their hearts. Such knowledge carries with it essential probation, let it dawn on the mind when and where it may.

I can not close this review of modern hypothetical speculations without saying—That in the face of all which the Scriptures have said and assumed, showing that the present probation *is a finality*, these speculations do exceedingly dishonor the testimony of the Scriptures, inasmuch as they unwarrantably expatiate in a field of conjecture which God has purposely closed, thus rendering a bold disservice to the interests of human salvation. They virtually cry peace, peace, when and where there is no peace; encourage procrastination not only until *near* death, but until *after* death, thus fearfully counteracting those forces of truth by means of which God would convert men ere yet it be too late. I speak not now of the aim and purpose of those who put forth these speculations and hypotheses. Of these *aims* I have neither occasion or desire to speak. I refer to natural, not to say inevitable tendencies and results.—I can suppose it may seem to the authors of these speculations that God's justice requires of them this vindication. If they think so, I

judge that they very much misconceive the case. If God's justice needed this vindication, it is safe to assume that he would have said or at least implied it in his word. We might surely look for it in those most minute and emphatic representations which so often fell from the lips of Jesus in regard to the abuse of life's one great trust—the rejection of God's great offers of salvation; the righteousness and finality of the godless sinner's doom. In fact, he dropped never a whisper that looks toward a future probation—never a whisper which can be construed to imply that final destiny, based on the moral decisions made by sinners in the present life, will lack any thing in the point of infinite justice, or will need another and future probation in order to justify the ways of God to men. Most surely it must be both safe and wise to leave the nature and the issues of earthly probation where Jesus felt it safe and wise to rest them.

THEODICY.

In its technical sense this term "*theodicy*" proposes to vindicate the justice of God in ordaining or permitting sin in his universe.——It will be readily seen that this is thoroughly fundamental to any worthy discussion of the subject of "Eternal Hope." The whole vast problem of sin under God's government involves it and really turns greatly upon it. All men, therefore, who think to purpose on these questions of sin, suffering, punishment, the eternal future of moral beings, must be reaching out with longing soul for some reasonably satisfactory scheme of theodicy. Men of candid, and reverent as well as thoughtful mind, will have a deep sense of the difficulties and the vastness of the themes involved in the problem, and will realize that if perfect relief from all its difficulties shall prove at present unattainable, yet every approximation toward it should be hailed with welcome.

The need and propriety of discussing this subject will perhaps become more apparent as the reader shall pass his eye over the following paragraph from Rev. Thomas J. Sawyer, speaking for modern Universalism in the *North American Review*, March, 1878, pp. 348, 349:

"The Universalist theology has the advantage of ending in a general harmony, while the Orthodox ends in an eternal discord; the former in unity, the latter in actual dualism—

two empires, as Augustine taught, standing side by side; one that of Christ, the other that of Satan—both equally indestructible and equally enduring! To be self-consistent, this system should begin with dualism, as it ends. Then moral evil would have an eternal ground and be self-existent as goodness is, and be enthroned in Satan as goodness is in God." . . .

"Has God, then, so carefully provided in the laws of our nature for the eternity of sin, and thus for our final damnation? Let us hope for the honor of his name that the moral economy of the universe has not been ordained by Infinite Wisdom and Holiness, chiefly in the interests of evil, to multiply and perpetuate it, and finally to crown it with immortality."

Such views suffice to press the question: Is there not a more excellent way—*i. e.*, a way in far better accord with known facts and with inspiration?

The very limited space that can be reasonably given to this subject here will compel me to the utmost brevity; and for this end, to a concise statement of principles, accompanied with little or no illustration, and commonly with no formal proof, leaving them to rest upon their self-evident character, or at least upon their very obvious relations and bearings.

1. This discussion *assumes* that God is infinitely wise and good—this assumption being perfectly legitimate here because the very point at issue is How to vindicate the justice of God, supposing him to be all-wise and all-good, and yet to have admitted sin and suffering into his universe.——Let it be noted that the main difficulties are involved in his admission of sin *at all*, and are scarcely augmented—perhaps even not at all—by its eternal duration;—certainly are not obviated by the denial of such duration.

2. When God had determined to create a universe of matter, the far more grave problem of creating intelligent moral agents called for decision.

At this point sin could have been kept out of his universe, for a negative decision would have precluded its possibility; and with the exclusion of all sin, would have precluded all suffering worthy of the name.——But what a desolation of negatives, such a universe must have been!

On the other hand an affirmative decision must inevitably carry with it the contingency of sin and its consequent sufferings; because a moral agent has in his very nature the

power to sin; and his using this power in actual sinning must turn upon his own voluntary choice.

3. To forestall here at the outset the superficial yet not infrequent objection that God could prevent all moral agents from sinning if he would, it ought to suffice to ask the objector;—Do you admit that God was thoroughly honest when through the old prophets he cried in the ears of men: "Oh, do not that abominable thing which I hate"? (Jer. 44: 4). Or when he declared upon his oath: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways; for why will ye die"? (Ezek. 33: 11).

4. We now come legitimately to the question: Upon *what conditions* it is both wise and benevolent in God to create moral agents?

Assuming his perfect foreknowledge of all possible results, we may answer: Not necessarily upon this sole condition, that He could shut out all sin; but only that He could confine it within such limits and by his overruling agencies, could educe so much good from it; or shall we say, from a moral universe with some sin in it—as would immensely enhance the amount of virtue and consequent blessedness in his moral kingdom. These results being foreseen, both his wisdom and his love must concur in his decision to create moral agents.

5. To present what is substantially the same doctrine in more expanded form, let us say—

God assumed infinite responsibilities when he determined to create moral agents;

But, negatively—did *not* make himself responsible to shut out all sin and its consequent suffering;—but only, affirmatively, to do all he wisely could to prevent it; never to make himself a responsible party toward its commission, *i. e.*, toward rebellion against his own throne;—also, to restrain it within the narrowest limits possible to himself, using the best means at his command for this purpose; and also to educe from it such compensating good as would indefinitely overbalance the inevitable evil.

On this exceedingly vital point in our discussion, it may not be amiss to specify yet more particularly, that God did not assume the responsibility of coercing moral agents by any such physical forces as would override and crush out their moral freedom;

Nor, again, for the sake of abating or even excluding all the forces of temptation, did He make himself responsible to annihilate our human sensibilities because they are sources of temptation and therefore inlets of sin;

Nor, again, for the same purpose of abating temptation, did he make himself responsible to rescind the social law of our nature, so that (*e. g.*) Eve could have been no temptation to her Adam; for who can measure the desolations that must come upon human souls with the extinction of this social law!

Nor yet, again (in the same line of thought), did God make himself responsible to put such restrictions upon this social law as would forever forbid all contact of mind between various orders of intelligent beings (say, the human and the angelic); for though it might seem very well to shut off Satan and his angels, yet who can measure the possible loss if under the same restriction, the holy angels were to be shut off too?——And in our own eternal future, who can measure the loss if the redeemed were to be shut off from being witnesses of God's love to countless orders of beings yet unborn!

In fine, we may perhaps generalize these points under this comprehensive principle;—God, having framed the laws of our being wisely, even "creating man in his own image," did not make himself responsible to subvert or essentially change those laws, because under their operation, sin would be contingent and possible.——The reader will notice that this line of argument assumes it to be wise in God to manage all things under *general laws* rather than otherwise—*i. e.*, rather than under no laws at all;—for surely this wisdom is not far to seek.——But on the other hand He did make himself responsible to bring into existence the most effective moral forces of truth, and specially, of truth *illustrated* and brought within the clear apprehension of created mind; and then to apply these forces in the best way possible to himself to secure obedience and its consequent blessedness.

6. At this stage of the discussion let us refresh our thought with the fact everywhere taught and assumed in the Scriptures—that the moral forces available for use upon moral agents against sin and unto holiness are mainly comprehended within these two;—Illustrated truth respecting God, his moral government—sin and its consequences on the one hand; and the Holy Spirit as a divine Teacher on the other —the latter never to supersede the former, and never to work

independently of and apart from it, but only, co-ordinately with and through it, to make its influence effective.

7. We now come to a very vital point in our discussion, viz.: The absolute necessity to finite minds of illustrated truth, revealing God to his creatures—this truth being of such sort and so illustrated as to become a moral power against sin and unto obedience.

Under this general head we may profitably consider the great ignorance of all created mind in the infancy of its being, in the immaturity of its powers and the utter meagerness of its experience; the very inadequate conception such mind must have of the invisible God and particularly of his moral character and claims until these have been illustrated to their finite capacities and brought to the level of their apprehension by appropriate developments and manifestations.——In order to see the bearing and force of these points, we might consider the case of our parents in Eden; and might also study the moral ways of God all down the ages of our world's history, remarkably filled with educating facts like the flood, Sodom, Egypt,—almost countless visitations of retributive judgment on nations and men for their sin; and not least, the far more wonderful manifestations of God through the incarnation and work of Christ.

In the same line of thought, it might be inquired how much (or rather how little) Satan—supposing him to have been the first sinner in the universe—could have known of the awful consequences of sin before he made the fearful plunge!

8. Beyond question we do actually see that God's ways in his moral government are shaped for the accumulation of moral forces by means of these illustrative facts, and may therefore surely infer that this shaping is done purposely for the results above suggested, viz., the accumulation of moral forces, to be utilized against sin and unto holiness.

Particularly let it be noted that only two fallen races are known to us—angels and men; that God's ways with these races have been not alike, but most widely unlike; that while toward the angels God moved on principles of strict, unmodified justice,—toward men he has moved in a system of blended justice and mercy; that the latter system could not have been (to our human view) safe before the moral universe without the antecedently forewarning and preparatory influence of the former; that these two methods, taken together, are exhaustive of all conceivable methods of deal-

ing with sin, no third method, unlike either, being even supposable;—and moreover, it may be added as a side remark that no second redemptive scheme analogous to this by the incarnation, sacrifice, and ultimate exaltation of the Son of God to the supremacy of the universe, is even supposable.

9. To put the bearing of these facts in their true and full light, it may be observed that thus far, experience has shown that it has been perilous to create moral races; for into every such race known to us, sin has entered.——But over against this otherwise appalling fact, we have for our relief the very manifest fact that, on a scale of immense magnitude, God is accumulating and at least preparing to utilize the moral forces both of retribution for sin and of divine love and mercy toward sinners to reclaim and save—all manifestly shaped to reveal God before created minds in such forms as will develop in their utmost strength the moral forces requisite to deter moral beings from sin by retribution, and to win them to eternal obedience by love.

10. Bearing upon the accumulation of moral forces from the gospel scheme in our world, it deserves special attention that they are yet in the infancy of their unfolding;—certainly so if there be significance in the fact that we are taught and therefore authorized to pray in faith that God's "will may be done on earth as it is in heaven;" or if there be truth in the prophecy that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."——Which things combine to show that there is yet to be an immense augmentation of moral forces, destined to be felt throughout the universe—emanating from the successful results of the gospel scheme in our world.

11. But the grand epoch in the moral history of the universe will be the final judgment-day—the point where the momentous facts of sin, redemption, retribution, are to have their supreme manifestation, and where moral forces are to be generated for use throughout the eternal future of God's kingdom;—in proof of which the following points have vital bearings:

(*a.*) All the moral beings then existing in the universe are to be present, the sinning races being there for their final trial; and all the unsinning as spectators of the august scene.——On these points the Scriptures are perfectly definite—that the angels who fell are held in chains under

darkness reserved to the judgment of that day; that the entire human race are to be judged then and there; and that then "the Son of Man shall come in his glory and *all the holy angels with him*"—spectators, learners of God, from this august assize.

(*b.*) Nothing can be made more plain than this;—that the one great purpose of this judgment-day is to bring out before the moral universe the grounds and reasons for the final doom of all the wicked, and for the final reward of all the righteous. It is to be God's supreme, sublime, perfect vindication of his moral ways before all then existing moral beings—a scene entirely unique in character—such as never occurred before; and as the Scriptures obviously assume, will never *occur again.*——True, if there were to be another probation for the beings then finally judged, or another sinning race to come under special moral treatment, then a second judgment-day would become a moral necessity; but the assumption throughout the Scriptures of no second judgment-day carries with it the exclusion of another probation for beings judged then, and also of any other falling race.

12. It is not only supposable but very highly probable that from and after this final judgment-day, there will be such resources of moral power available for use in the moral universe as will make it entirely safe to create moral races onward and onward indefinitely. So much will be known and knowable of God, of his moral kingdom, of the folly of sin and of the ruin it brings on the sinner; of the blessedness of obedience; of the great depths of God's love; of the ineffable glories of the incarnation and of redemption—as will hold all the then unsinning in perfect obedience, and all the new-born also in the eternal allegiance of love and homage to God.

13. It is entirely supposable, not to say virtually certain, that the creation of moral beings is yet in its very early stages.

In support of this view, there is not the least occasion to make an argument from our ignorance on the ground that we know of but few compared with the vast provision made for their accommodation in the known, visible worlds of matter.——Forbearing to make the least use of this argument we rely upon the moral argument alone—the staple points of which are:

(1.) That indefinitely greater moral forces against sinning and unto obedience are yet to be developed in our world be-

tween this hour and the final judgment, but far above this and especially, are to be evolved then and by means of that august manifestation of God.

(2.) That it can not be wise in God to create moral races on any extensive scale before those moral forces are developed into practical form, and especially while God is so manifestly accumulating them and preparing them to bear effectively upon created minds.

(3.) That having provided the moral forces—*i. e.*, the requisite facts and agencies for their full development, it must certainly be the demand of love and the province of wisdom to *use* them and by no means to forbear to use them—inasmuch as in and by their use, He can proceed to multiply holy and happy beings indefinitely, and thus enhance the blessedness of his universe without limit and without peril.——Or to put this point in fewest words;—*Before* the requisite moral forces are developed for use and while yet in the process of preparation, it could not be wise to create moral races on any large scale; but *after* their full development, both wisdom and love must demand their creation.

14. As one very strong point in our scheme of Theodicy it assumes—what the Scriptures uniformly assert—the eternal duration of punishment in the case of both lost angels and lost, unreclaimed men.

The demands of justice are essentially of the same nature in the universal kingdom of God as the demands of the public good in every human civil government, viz., the production and conservation of moral forces to bear against transgression of wholesome law and unto the good order, peace and welfare of society.

In regard to the eternity of punishment, the problem seems to be simply this:—Adequate moral forces having been produced at fearful cost, shall they be conserved or extinguished? Shall they be perpetuated for the peace, the purity, the highest blessedness of a universe filling up and supposably to be filled with moral beings; or shall they be annihilated—suffered to drop out of existence—so that in the lapse of eternal ages the moral universe will be left as void of their presence and power as if they had never been?

This great question bears upon two distinct classes:—one of moral beings already in existence before this supposed termination of hell and its sufferings: the other of myriads then unborn, but supposably to be subsequently brought into existence.

As to the first class the problem is virtually this:

Is the memory of finite beings really infinite—*i. e.*, capable of holding in unabated, never waning strength any and all impressions, knowledges, once in the mind, but left by the utter lapse of their causes upon the mere strength of memory to hold them forever and forever?

The question is not whether the human memory, having the help of suggestive facts continually present or frequently recurring, can retain its impressions with no loss of vividness and strength; but is rather this:—whether when suggestive, supporting, quickening facts are no longer present, the memory can really defy all lapse of time to weaken its grasp? For if it be admitted that, thrown upon its inherent powers with no help from present surroundings, it must inevitably wane in power and lose in vividness, then, the lapse of time along the cycles of eternal ages must certainly obliterate its impressions and the moral influence coming in from the punishment of sin must be utterly lost to all minds in the universe except God's.

The result will therefore be that, hell having become extinct, the universe, outside of God, will ultimately become as though hell had never been.

And if retribution for sin is one of the potent forces for restraining moral agents from sinning, then sin may enter again, and the scenes of its retribution must be again repeated.——That is to say, the ultimate problem before the divine mind was—either one eternal hell; or an eternal succession of hells of limited duration—with the preponderance of moral power for good and of happiness secured immensely in favor of the former and against the latter. So much in reference to the case of moral races whose existence began before hell became (by the supposition) extinct.

But in reference to races brought into being subsequent to this supposed extinction, the question is in no manner contingent upon an eternal memory. No good influence from scenes of retribution transpiring and utterly closing before they were born can ever reach them with any practical force. They are virtually back where Satan and Adam were when they fell; and the fearful results of new ages of sin—new races of rebels—are liable, not to say morally certain, to be repeated.——Therefore it is not a rash, unwarranted conclusion that infinite wisdom and love do accept the painful yet better alternative of one hell, as enduring as sin, bearing within itself the moral forces

requisite for the moral safety of the universe forever and ever—as against the alternative of an eternal succession of scenes of rebellion and of punishment, each limited in duration.

15. Bringing to a focus the main points already presented, we reach the following conclusion, viz., That from and after the final judgment and its eternal issues of retribution for the wicked and the righteous, outlying before the intelligent universe, there will be moral forces extant, adequate to hold sin in check forever so that no more beings then holy shall ever sin, and no more moral races, new-born, shall ever fall. Consequently the number of sinners in the universe will have reached its maximum and sin may thenceforth be considered a stationary and not a growing quantity.

On the other hand, a material universe, almost empty of moral races is to be filled; these surpassingly vast resources of moral power are to be utilized to the utmost—this process of utilization providing benevolent service for all the holy and not least for all the redeemed—thus heightening their blessedness immeasurably—all which must eternally swell the amount of holiness and blessedness in God's universal kingdom.

Thus while sin and its consequent woe are a fixed and not increasing amount, holiness and its consequent blessedness are eternally increasing—the blessedness, let it be remembered, increasing in a geometrical ratio, this being the law of benevolent action and its blessedness; each one's joy heightening every other one's joy—the joy of each becoming the joy of all. Hence the ultimate result must be this:—Comparing the respective amounts of evil and of good in the universe—*i. e.*, the amount of sin and suffering on the one side and the amount of holiness and blessedness on the other, the former in the course of the eternal ages will become relatively to the latter infinitesimally small; the latter immeasurably great and virtually infinite.——These data being given, no logical conclusion can possibly be more certain.——In these results God will be infinitely blessed in himself, and infinitely glorified before his intelligent universe; the justice no less than the wisdom and the love of his moral system will be gloriously vindicated; and his creatures will never more ask for a theodicy that will satisfy the utmost demands of their intelligence and of their heart.

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